DÆDALUS

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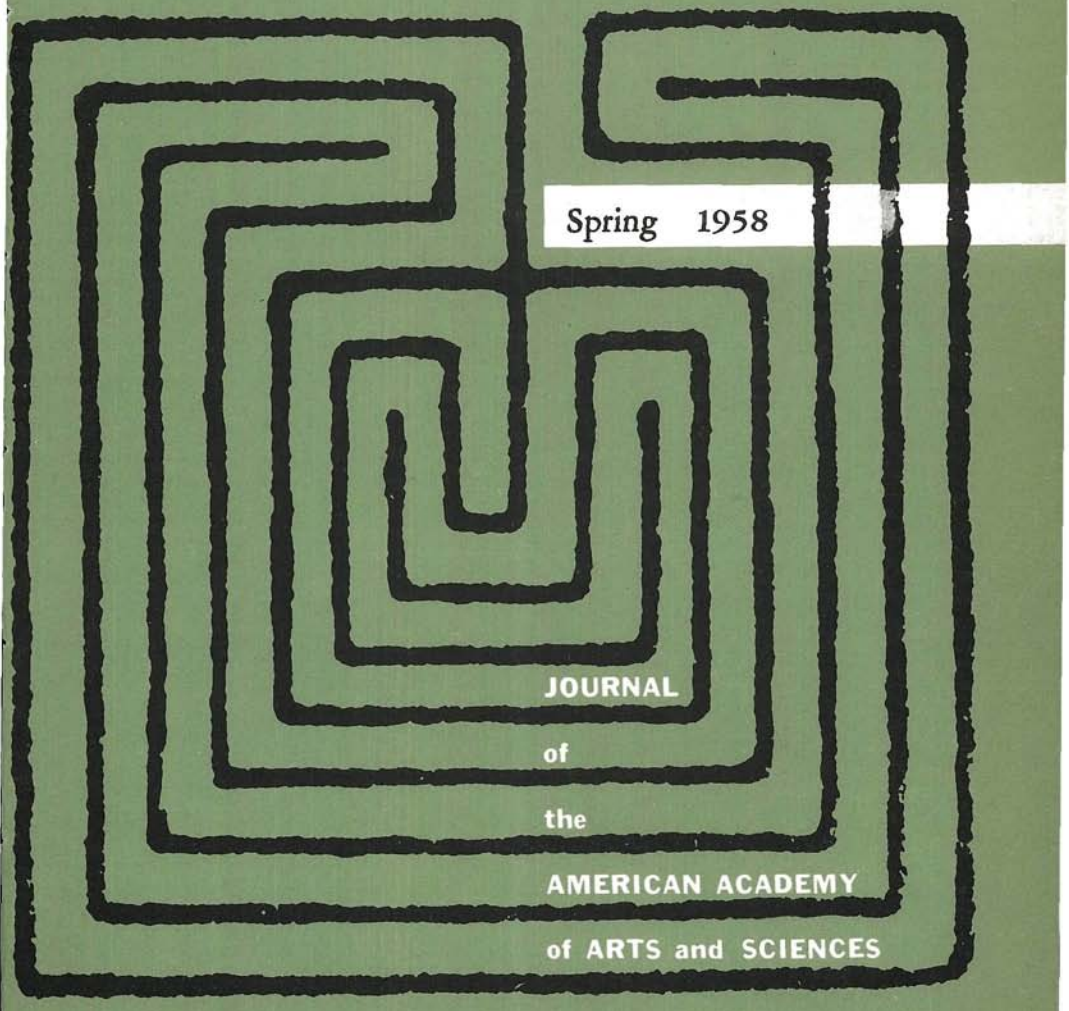
THE AMERICAN NATIONAL STYLE



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DÆDALUS

Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences

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Preface to the Issue "The American National Style"

W. W. Rostow

The origin of this group of five essays on the topic "The American National Style" lies in the receding past, when I was an officer assigned to work in the British Air Ministry in 1943-1945. I was a privileged observer and minor participant in the air war as it came to its climax in Europe. The difference between British and American styles in the planning and execution of military operations was evident even to the least perceptive and most preoccupied observer.

These reflections on the link between the inner nature of societies and the way they handled the peculiar problems of war came to mind again when, as Harmsworth Professor at Oxford in 1946, I delivered an inaugural lecture. I chose then to consider, in a paper called "The American Diplomatic Revolution," the position on the world scene the United States was likely to adopt in coming years, and how the nation's performance would be strengthened and weakened by certain forces imbedded in its domestic values and arrangements. Over the decade that followed, every experience of military and foreign policy strengthened the view that the nation's fate would be determined in coming decades less by our enemies than by what course of action we were capable or incapable of generating from our society. Out of this conviction, I undertook in 1955 to direct the American Project at the Center for International Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, returning directly to the theme of the inaugural lecture.

In agreeing to finance the project, officers of the Carnegie Corporation suggested that we might wish to hold a conference related to the theme of the project, and they generously provided the requisite funds. The conference, held at Dedham, Massachusetts, May 23 to May 27, 1957, was planned with the help of a committee including McGeorge Bundy, Clyde Kluckhohn, Elting Morison, David Potter, and Arthur Schlesinger, Sr. Max Millikan chaired this committee and the conference itself, to which in addition to the authors about twenty persons – academics and others – were invited. Early in the autumn of 1958, under the title *The*

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American Style: Essays in Value and Performance, Harpers will publish the full text of these foreshortened papers, together with commentaries, an account by Morison of the subsequent discussion, and extracts from the transcript.

The project will yield at least three other books: *Forging a New Sword*, by Colonel William Kintner, on the organization of the Pentagon, which has been already published; a volume on the postwar American economy by Massachusetts Institute of Technology economists, edited by Ralph Freeman; and my own effort to grapple with the central problem of the project, *The United States and the World*. The latter two books should appear early in 1959.

The themes of these papers arose from reflections at an early stage of the work on the American military problem and performance; but each author was, of course, wholly free to deal with his theme as he wished. The papers were the core of a gathering memorable to the participants; and we hope that their advance publication here will be of value to the wider audience of *Dædalus*.

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America's Administrative Response to Its World Problems

George F. Kennan

The manner in which, in a complex modern society, the efforts of great numbers of people are harnessed to the performance of a single function is obviously something that reflects in the most intimate way the basic cultural and spiritual tenets of the people in question. Concepts of the proper mutual approach as between subordinate and superior and among colleagues, methods of selection and promotion, modalities of decision-taking and command, the manner in which the dignity and enthusiasm and initiative of the individual are to be treated within a complex disciplinary framework – all these flow, inevitably, from philosophic concepts, assumptions, habits, and traditions that strike to the heart of the entire personality of a people and run through every phase of its life where large-scale organization is practiced, governmental and nongovernmental alike.

To attempt to make an assessment of a nation's concepts and habits of administration generally would be to undertake a sociological study of vast dimensions and would far surpass the possibilities of this paper. What can be done within this framework can be only suggestive and illustrative. It must be confined to limited examples, and it can serve, at best, to indicate on the basis of these examples the nature of a problem that assumes a host of other forms throughout the entire panorama of American life.

Confronted with this necessity, I have chosen to address the paper simply to problems of administration within government, rather than to problems in our society at large, and only to that part of government which deals with the external relations of the country. The discussion relates, therefore, primarily to the Department of State and the other civilian agencies that perform work generally concerned with external relations, as well as to those branches of the executive offices and of the Pentagon that deal primarily with problems of foreign affairs.

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1. The Problem

In the course of the past half century the portion of the United States government in question has grown to something in the order of fifty to sixty times its original size. In the last twenty years alone, the growth has been somewhere upwards of 1,000 per cent. This expansion has occurred for the most part in a few great spurts, the two world wars and the period of "cold war" in the late forties being the principal occasions.

With this stormy growth, spelling as it did the transition from the small, intimate organization to the vast, impersonal one, there came all the normal concomitants of bigness and complexity: a greatly increased coefficient of internal friction within the governmental machinery; an elaborate cumbersomeness of the decision-taking process; a sacrifice of timeliness and incisiveness in the decisions taken; a ponderous inertia in the apparatus as a whole; a loss of flexibility; mechanical, impersonal personnel procedures, with attendant loss of efficiency in utilization of personnel, and so on.

It is not surprising that today, when a state of relative if precarious stabilization has been reached in the development of this particular segment of the governmental machinery, there should be questions in many minds about the reasons for this rapid growth and its implications. Does this enormity signify health or disease? Is it really all necessary, or could it have been avoided without damage to the national interest? Are its drawbacks trivial, or are they seriously harmful?

It is safe to say that in the entire realm of public affairs there are few other questions of such importance which have been subjected to so little systematic study, about which so little is scientifically known, and for which the statistical background is at once so vast, so unordered, and so inadequate. Judgments about it can be, in the face of this situation, only subjective and intuitive, based on personal experience rather than on scientific analysis.

Reactions to the questions just mentioned tend to polarize into two opposing views, which might be described as the reassuring one and the anxious one. Let us glance at them in that order.

2. The Reassuring View

The great majority of senior officials and administrators in government would probably take substantially the following position. Bigness, they would say, is unavoidable and here to stay. It is a

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normal expression of the new role the United States has come to play in world affairs and the new responsibilities it has assumed. It flows from the demands of the "cold war"; from the increased number of "clients" of American policy; from the introduction of new devices of American diplomacy – alliances, propaganda, foreign aid. Neither size nor complexity of the present governmental apparatus could be appreciably reduced without real damage to the national interest. Those who yearn back to the days of small staffs and intimate circles of participants in the policy-making process are indulging a sentimental nostalgia for the horse-and-buggy days of American diplomacy. The only practical course open to us today is not to attempt to abolish bigness but to find ways of living successfully with it and of making it work.

In support of this view, the following points would be made:

(a) The growth in governmental machinery merely corresponds to the growth in function.

(b) There has been comparable growth in other branches of government, in private activities affecting foreign affairs, and in the corresponding machinery of other governments. Not only does this prove that there is some overriding necessity involved in the phenomenon of rapid growth, but it creates a liaison and communication requirement which would compel the United States government to resort to something resembling the present large staffs even if it were otherwise disinclined to do so.

(c) Even with governmental employment at its present levels, almost all responsible officials in executive positions complain of overwork; the answer to present problems may thus turn out to be not less personnel but even more.

(d) The problems with which American statesmanship has to deal in the foreign field have achieved a degree of complexity which renders them no longer fit subjects for individual judgment and insight, no matter how perceptive or otherwise qualified; these problems must, to be correctly solved, be subjected to highly-organized collective study in which a variety of technical skills, funds of specialized knowledge, and governmental interests can be brought to bear on their solution. This necessitates large staffs and intricate organization. Concentration of authority in the hands of a single individual, to be exercised without full use of the established machinery for collective study and decision-taking, is, in fact, positively dangerous. Authority thus concentrated is apt to be

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exercised on inadequate information and to lack roundedness of judgment. In particular, it is apt to ignore the interests of departments and agencies of the government other than the one taking the action.

(e) The yearning back to the small organization in the field of foreign relations is usually connected with a nostalgia for the compact elite career group, self-perpetuating and self-administered, removed from the management of governmental personnel in general and operating largely on its own standards and traditions. But this is undemocratic. It means the cultivation of a governmental entity alien to the spirit and background of the American people and separated, administratively, from the remainder of the American governmental services, where popular tastes and interests find their normal expression. It tends toward snobbishness, arrogance, and a conspiratorial method of operation. It forfeits the resources of specialized knowledge and skill now essential to the formulation of an adequate judgment on policy matters and to the proper execution of programs and decisions.

(f) The need for uniformity of administration and personnel management throughout the government leaves no room for the quaint, parochial administrative devices of the old State Department and Foreign Service. The entire administrative and managerial function must be laid out on a large scale, and the various departments and agencies operating in the foreign field must be required to adjust to the general governmental standards, instead of developing methods of administration and personnel management geared merely to their own particular functions.

(g) Such deficiencies as do exist in the large governmental entity can be ironed out by improvement of the machinery itself; what is needed is further study by experts professionally trained in problems of personnel management and administration and the devising of better systems of co-ordination, control, and utilization of human resources through the entire field of activity.

(h) To the extent that large-scale organization might have drawbacks that would not yield entirely to the correct human-engineering approach, these are of secondary importance. A few people too many are not going to be a serious burden to an economy of such dimensions as that of the United States today, whereas many too few could cripple the programs to which the government is committed and on which the security of the nation depends.

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3. The Anxious View

Opposed to this school of thought is another which sees bigness as a dangerous evil in itself, is suspicious of the soundness of the causes that have produced it, and does not believe that adequate remedial measures could be found short of a basic change in the spirit of administration and a drastic reduction in the scale of the operation.

Addressing themselves to the first point cited above as substantiation for the reassuring view, namely, that growth in personnel has merely kept up with the growth of function, the adherents of the second school would deny that there is adequate proof of this assertion. They would cite numerous instances in which the opposite would appear to be the case. The London *Economist*, in its witty and only semifacetious article on "Parkinson's Law" (November 19, 1955), drew attention to the fact that, whereas the Royal Navy had 67 per cent fewer ships in commission in 1928 than in 1914 and 31.5 per cent fewer officers and men on its lists, the shore establishment used to support this was greater in all categories – 78 per cent greater, in fact, when it came to Admiralty officials. American critics would find similar illustrations. They might question – to take a random example – whether the functions of the American Foreign Service in Germany are really five to ten times greater today, as the personnel complement would seem to imply, than they were in the first years of the recent war, before Pearl Harbor, when the American official staff there handled not only American interests but also those of a number of belligerent countries, not just for the present reduced territory of Germany but for the entire united country, and not even for this alone, but for a number of German-occupied territories as well. They might question why the Moscow Embassy, having substantially the same functions now as it had twenty years ago in a country where there are no American investments and no appreciable colony of American residents, should have in the bosom of its official family today more children than it had official staff and dependents together in 1937. Any number of other examples could be found.

The adherents of this second school would not deny that both America and its world environment have become bigger and more complex in these twenty years or that America's role in the world has grown. They would be prepared to admit that the Department

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of State has a great deal more to do than it had in those earlier years. But that the growth in the Department's functions has really been upwards of 600 per cent they would greatly doubt. They would cite a number of indexes – population, number of foreign governments, extent of commerical and financial exchanges, foreign investment, travel by Americans, rate of immigration, and so on – to show that in no instance does the rate of growth approach anything like this figure. They would argue that this means one of two things: either a great deal of machinery has been needlessly created as a result of poor administrative practices or misunderstandings of one sort or another; or, if the growth of the machinery was really unavoidable, then there is a law of diminishing returns that operates on the efficiency of governmental organization in certain fields as size increases, in which case one would eventually reach a point (and some would say it had already been reached) where masses of new people could be added without any appreciable increase in the genuine work output of the organization. In either case, these people would point out, bigness is revealed as an evil.

As to the second point – that the growth in this sector of government only parallels similar growth elsewhere – the adherents of the second school would not deny this for a moment. They would not even deny that this circumstance constitutes one of the few really valid and unanswerable reasons for bigness, in that it creates liaison and communication requirements far greater than anything that would otherwise exist. That the administration of foreign affairs proceeds today in a general climate of bigness they would not dispute; and they would recognize that for this reason the chances of combating it successfully are poor unless the effort is made on a very wide scale indeed. They would point to the armed services as probably the main source of contagion and would cheerfully concede the difficulty involved for other departments and agencies in attempting even to exist in proximity to the Pentagon without themselves resorting to bigness in self-defense.

But all this, they would argue, only proves what everyone knows: that bigness is contagious and that bad organization tends to drive out good. And they would question whether the overexpansion in other places is not the product of precisely the same dangerous and unhealthy tendencies that have produced overexpansion in the State Department.

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To the argument that people are overworked, the adherents of the second school would reply that this also proves nothing at all: that the inordinate internal friction of the great organization – its muscle-bound quality – is precisely what consumes the energies of its people in so appalling a proportion, so that if you get the organization large enough and give it only the most rudimentary function to perform it will still keep masses of people overworked.

As to the alleged superiority of the collective method of decision-taking, representatives of the anxious school would – again – not deny that decision must be refined by expert advice or that the interests to be kept in mind today in most decisions on foreign affairs are complex in the extreme and not familiar to any single person. But they would argue that thought is, by its very nature, an individual process, not a collective one; that to be useful thought must be communicated; that to be communicated it must be passed through the filter of the single mind that puts it into words; that it cannot, therefore, be greater than what a single mind can comprehend and state. There is thus no such thing as collective judgment; there is only individual judgment, enriched and refined on occasion by the advice of others, and commanding, in certain cases, the approval of a wider body. This being the case, the pretense of a collective wisdom underlying so much of the governmental committee system today is simply a form of play acting and self-deception – an elaborate exercise which fragmentizes responsibility without broadening thought. Not only this, but it leads, these people would argue, to a complete sacrifice of incisiveness and style – not only literally, in actual effectiveness of communication, but also in the broader sense of the style of statesmanship itself, which can never be expressive and convincing unless it is the product of a single human personality.

As for the criticism that the small, compact organization is snobbish and undemocratic, the adherents of the second school would maintain that this criticism was merely the reflection of a prevailing jealousy on the part of Congress, other branches of the government, and the press of any genuinely select service which insists on putting quality before quantity, which has its own administrative integrity, which is impervious to domestic-political influence, which defies the leveling hand of the professional administrator, and which cannot be entered laterally at higher levels by people who would not be able to meet the normal requirements for entrance

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at the bottom. It would be denied that there is anything undemocratic about the cultivation of a tightly-organized professional corps which could stand at the center of the government's foreign affairs work and which would be based on superiority of background, intelligence, education, and performance. They would not claim that the old Foreign Service had adequately met this requirement, but they would consider it to be wholly possible, given observance of the correct principles, to create a service that did. They would hold that such a unit would – for reasons of discipline, personal excellence, and ease of internal communication – be a more effective aid to the President than what we have today; that the President has a right to the best he can get in the way of assistance; that the Executive Branch of the government is supposed to be a disciplined institution, not a debating society or a forum for the manifestations of the virtues of the average citizen, and that to fear excellence and exclusiveness in this form of work is to confuse democracy with doctrinaire social egalitarianism aimed at the suppression of talent and individuality rather than the achievement of maximum efficiency in the governmental service. They would claim that the tendency today is to achieve administrative arrangements geared completely to the workings of mediocrity, arrangements which, as the saying goes, "the least talented can operate, and the most intelligent cannot disturb."

Leaving the field of rebuttal and turning to the attack, the members of the anxious school of thought would point to the obviously unsound and in some instances disreputable causes that enter into the creation of the elephantiasis by which the governmental machinery is now marked. They would call attention to the way in which government is geared to favor expansion rather than contraction, to the psychological and sometimes even legal or procedural factors that make it so much easier to hire than to fire. They would point to the rampant empire-building, to that unconquerable human tendency to feed the ego by cultivating the trappings of bureaucratic power even where the substance is lacking. They would point to the excessive paternalism borrowed from the army, initially justified by wartime conditions but preserved almost undiminished today: the insistence of the government on providing its charges with housing, transportation, education, medical service, parking places, stores, shopping discounts, recreational facilities, literature – practically everything, in fact, but romantic

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love – and all of this, again, at the cost of more personnel, more machinery. In all such things, the skeptics would find justification for the suspicion that a great deal of government growth is not a response to the pressure of new external demands but the product of certain unhealthy immanent processes, involuntary and subconscious, that take hold of organizations once a certain border of intimacy and compactness has been left behind.

4. Basic Faults in Present Administrative Methods

It will not have escaped the observant reader that the author of this paper himself is, in general, a protagonist of the second school of thought. This being so, he would like to state in his own words where he believes the greatest dangers of the present administrative principles to lie.

The present system is based, throughout, on what appears to be a conscious striving for maximum fragmentation and diffusion of power. This operates on each of the two major planes by which all governmental work is ordered: administrative and substantive.

On the administrative plane it takes the form of the divorce of administrative functions from the substantive chain of command and their subordination to special independent hierarchies of administrators, managers, and security officials. With respect to inanimate things – supplies, premises, communication channels, and so on – this practice is unexceptionable. With respect to persons, it is wholly misconceived.

It deprives the superior officer in the substantive chain of command of one of the most vital tools for the proper accomplishment of his own work: the right to select and control the personnel who are to assist him. By divorcing personnel control from the substantive aspects of a man's performance, it ensures that personnel decisions are made on the basis of every sort of judgment other than the one most qualified, most informed, and most intimately associated with the man's usefulness to the government, namely, that of his immediate superior in his regular work. The individual officer or employee is left with the impression that, strive as he may to please those who are his visible superiors during the hours he spends at the office, his fate will be determined by members of an invisible fraternity of administrators and security agents whose identity he does not know, who do not know him, and for whom he is only a card from the business machine, bearing certain perfora-

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tions intelligible only to another business machine. With the achievement of this state of affairs, the sense of pride in work suffers, along with the hope of any genuine and reliable relationship between effort and reward. In their place is left only an uncomfortable sense of being at the mercy of forces unknown and unseen, a condition that grips subordinate and superior together in a sort of Kafka-esque nightmare to which there is no end and from which there is no escape. If, in these circumstances, enthusiasm and devotion survive – as fortunately they often do – they are usually the result of a mutual respect and sympathy among associates and a common devotion to the government's interests strong enough to override the sense of insecurity and the dimness of the connection between effort and recognition.

I am aware that the opinions of the immediate superior are consulted and do enter theoretically into personnel decisions, if not into security control. But the decision lies, after all, with a third party; the opinions of the immediate superior are utilized only at second hand; and the devices for the communication of those opinions (such as forms, questionnaires, multiple-choice questions) are in many instances so miserably inadequate and misconceived that they would stand as barriers, rather than conveyors, to the transmission of any apt and subtly-informed judgment.

This highly impersonal system of personnel control rests on the desire to find ways of judging people that get away from personal opinion and personal responsibility. This tendency is almost inevitable whenever numbers get so large that the persons doing the judging cannot have any personal knowledge of the subjects. But it rests, unavoidably, on the assumption that there exist such things as adequate and fully comparable objective criteria, divorced from personal opinion, for judging a man's worth as an employee of the government. This could not be more mistaken. There is no such thing as an abstract, objective evaluation of a human being, independent of the personality of the one who judges. The only definition of a man's worth that has reality is the image as seen by another man, and that image is a reflection of – and a reflection on – both of them. The judgment, in other words, is valueless without a knowledge of the judger as well as of the judged. This is why one cannot realistically depart from the human personality in its most intimate sense as the basis of selection and promotion and handling, generally, of personnel. To attempt to make this departure

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is to operate in a world of unrealities, dealing not with men themselves but with distorted shadows of them, at the price of inefficient, wasteful use of their talents and sacrifice of that particular enthusiasm and devotion that come from the assurance that one's official fate is likely to be a reasonably faithful reflection of the quality of one's effort.

The cultivation of an impersonal system of personnel control rests of course on the understandable desire to achieve maximum fairness and uniformity in the terms of competition. It is also true that no personnel system can be properly operated, even in a moderately large organization, without *some* centralized system of record-keeping and without the invocation of *some* general criteria designed to guard against the aberrations of the biased, unjust, or erratic superior. One cannot leave men exclusively to the mercy of the man they happen to work for at any given moment.

But what is involved here is the question of the weight to be given to the various components of a personnel decision. It is my contention that the preponderant voice should always be that of a superior who knows the man personally, who has firsthand knowledge of his performance in his work, and who is interested in him as a human being – not that of remote, unseen individuals devoid of experience in the substantive aspects of the work of the man they are judging and protected by their anonymity from the real responsibility that resides in the shaping of the fate of individual employees of the government. So long as the latter system prevails, the premium for the individual employee will continue to lie not in boldness, not in individuality, not in imagination, but rather in the cultivation of that nice mixture of noncontroversialness and colorless semicompetence that corresponds most aptly to the various banal distinctions of which, alone, the business machine is capable.

As for the fragmentation and diffusion of power on the substantive plane, this begins of course at the very top, with the fragmentation of the responsibility for conducting, under the President's direction, the foreign affairs of the nation. The very fact that there are several departments and agencies involved in this work, and none with real authority over the others, sets the tone for the distribution of responsibility all the way down the line. There is, of course, the National Security Council; but this is a body capable only of sporadic, solemn decisions, laboriously prepared and negotiated among the various government offices prior to their submission to

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the President. It does not yet have, to my knowledge, the independent professional staff it would require for the kind of decision which is needed; and the very nature of its composition (the executive heads of various government departments) militates against detached judgment. What the foreign affairs segment of the government needs is not primarily an occasional National Security Council paper but intimate day-by-day, hour-by-hour direction, sensitive to the smallest significant change in the world situation. It needs, in the language of the day, to be ridden herd on; and this is precisely what the National Security Council cannot do for it.

From this center, the system of diffused authority spreads downward into a thousand branches and twigs of the governmental tree. At every level, decision-taking proceeds by the cultivation of consensus among various units in committees which operate on the veto principle, each unit represented being effectively in a position to bar, or at least to delay, action not acceptable to it. Whether it was the original intent that committees should operate in this manner I do not know. A Department of State handbook on committees, from about the year 1949, affords no evidence that committees were conceived to operate in any other way than this; and this is certainly the way most of them functioned in Washington at that time. Such operation is, of course, only an extrapolation of the internal initialing system of the Department of State, where outgoing communications usually require the initials of a number of offices, each one of which can hold up the communication if it withholds approval. The fact that a single office may be designated as the one with primary responsibility does not give that office the power to act independently. The system thus operates on the principle embodied in the words so frequently heard from senior officials of the Department: "Anything you fellows can agree on is all right with me."

Now if what were at stake were only action, this might, in some instances, have its virtue in assuring that action would be sound and that all the aspects of the government's interests had been taken into account. But when the question is one of thought and analysis and political philosophy, this method has grievous handicaps. The result, as everyone in government knows, is usually a least common denominator of opinion: compromised language, platitude, obscurity, a hodgepodge inferior to any of the individual views out of which it is brewed. A great portion of the lack of authority and incisive-

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ness in the positions taken by the government can surely be laid to this method of decision-taking.

Opinions vary on the origin of this curious committee system. It has flourished particularly on the military side of the river, and particularly in the relations between the three services. There is a plausible theory that it was in large measure a somewhat misconceived importation of the British committee system, with which our armed services came into extensive contact during World War II. There are other analogies drawn from the separation of powers in our government as a whole and from the unbelievable obscuration of responsibility achieved by the legislative committee system.

The basic assumption underlying this fear of a rigid, clear allotment of responsibility is surely the belief that such allotment lends itself to dictatorship and to curtailment of the liberties and rights of others. There is a feeling that concentration of authority is in some way "undemocratic," that the allotment to a single individual of the power to decide something is in some way incompatible with the spirit of the American political system. Ignored, of course, is the fact that authority is required to protect freedom just as it is required to assail freedom. Beyond this there is the failure to realize that what is involved in the conduct of external relations is merely the exercise of a personal authority which already constitutionally exists and which is absolutely essential to the transaction of the country's international business. The interdivisional and interagency squabbles in Washington represent a form of insistence on fragmentizing at lower levels a power which the fathers of the constitution meant to unify when they invested it in the President of the United States.

The amount of time and manpower consumed in the effort to arrive at consensus in this manner among numbers of governmental entities in an endless series of questions has to be seen to be believed. The portion of each day spent by higher officials in committee meetings, while papers, phone calls, and messages accumulate at their desks, is a part of the price paid for this method of decision-taking, as is the great volume of internal written correspondence about such matters: the chits, the opinions, the position papers.

The aggregate result of these deficiencies – the flight from the individual, the striving for the creation of machinery to replace individual insight and judgment, the labored diffusion of power – is to give to the governmental apparatus an inflexibility, an inertia, a

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sluggishness, and an incoherence in communication that render it an inferior instrument in the hands of the senior officials of government.

No one, I think, who has worked in the immediate vicinity of a Secretary of State or President can fail to have been impressed with the difficulty involved for either of these officials in making use of so vast and complex a machinery. They cannot apprehend it. They cannot memorize or picture its table of organization.

The regular governmental machinery was designed to serve the President and the Secretary of State in two ways: first, as a source of information, stimulus, and recommendation with relation to the exercise of their responsibility, and, secondly, as a channel for the implementation of their decisions.

So far as the first of these purposes is concerned, it is plain that the contribution the regular apparatus is capable of making bears no proper relation to its size and to the enormity of its effort. This is partly the result of the very limited time the senior officials have in which to absorb information and impulses of all sorts brought to them through the regular channels;* but it is also partly a consequence of the inferior form in which this information is produced – inferior, that is, from the standpoint of its effectiveness in engaging and impressing the mind of anyone so busy, so overwhelmed with ulterior preoccupations, and so constituted by education and intellect as most presidents and most secretaries of state are apt to be. On countless occasions subordinates have been surprised and disappointed – sometimes even personally hurt – to find that the Secretary or the President has been more decisively influenced by some chance outside contact or experience than by the information and advice offered to him through the regular channels. Either he has talked with someone from outside whose statements seemed somehow simpler and more striking and appealing than anything he had heard from his own subordinates, or the same effect has been produced upon him by some newspaper or magazine article he read or by something he heard on the radio or saw on the newsreels or on television.

*Who has not seen, for example, at international conferences, the huge black briefing books remain idle and unused because the chiefs have no time to look at them? Who has not seen experts by the dozen cool their heels through such conferences, unconsulted and unused because the chiefs have no time to talk to them?

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There is, admittedly, a real injustice here in most instances. The statements of the fascinating outsider often prove in retrospect to have been less sound and balanced than the final product of official judgment, and the items purveyed by the mass media are found to be dangerously oversimplified and inadequate as a basis for official action.

But the regular subordinates are inclined to forget or ignore the deadening effect of the bureaucracy on all forms of communication, oral and written. Whereas the products of the mass media are designed to strike and to hold briefly the attention of busy people, and whereas the statements of the outside visitor are apt to have at least the charm of the expression of a single human mind, with all its directness and freshness, the products of the official machinery are almost invariably dull and pedestrian, drafted or spoken in the usual abominable governmentese, and even, in many instances, intellectually inferior by virtue of the extensive compromising of language which has preceded their final formulation. In short, the busy senior executive frequently finds more useful and meaningful to him the product of the individual mind than the product of a tortured collective effort; and it is only the latter that he gets from his assistants.

In the execution of policy, we see the same phenomenon. Anyone who has ever had anything to do with the conduct of foreign relations knows that policies can be correctly and effectively implemented only by people who understand the entire philosophy and world of thought of the person or persons who took the original decision. But senior officials are constantly forced to realize that in a governmental apparatus so vast, so impersonal, and so lacking in any sort of ideological indoctrination and discipline, they cannot count on any great portion of the apparatus to understand entirely what they mean. The people in question here are in large part people they do not know personally and cannot hope to know in this way. Considerations of security alone would make it difficult, in many instances, to initiate into the reasons of action all those who might be involved if one were to use the regular channels. The expansion of the governmental apparatus has led to a steady inflation of titles roughly matching that of the growth of the apparatus itself. As a result the stature of many titles and offices has been reduced in everyone's eyes, and dozens of officials who ought, by virtue of the titles they hold, to serve as vehicles for

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the execution of policy are prevented from doing so because they would now be considered too low-level to be acceptable to other governments, or even other departments of our own government, as interlocutors and negotiators. Try as one will, one simply cannot make the vast organization absorb or replace the small circle of responsible officials as the center for the formulation and execution of policy.

For all these reasons, there is a growing tendency to have policy executed personally at the top. There was once a day when matters of world-shaking importance were carried forward, discussed, and negotiated by counselors of embassy and chargés d'affaires. Today the Secretary of State or the President feels obliged to jump into a plane and do the job himself. The governmental machinery is simply too unwieldy, too cumbersome, too unknown, and too deflated of meaning by its own vastness to be useful as an instrument of policy. The facelessness inflicted on a horde of officials by the vastness and complexity of the organizational framework in which they are buried has deprived them of personal status in the eyes of foreign governments, or even of other American agencies, and has thus reduced their usefulness to those they are supposed to serve.

It is these realities which raise the question as to the value of the great organization, per se, as an aid to the President in the execution of his most solemn responsibilities with respect to the conduct of foreign relations. The damage is not only that the President tends to bypass it; the damage is that he does not have at his side what he needs to do his work, and this lack is most serious of all in the conceptual field.

It need hardly be pointed out that the position of the United States in the world today is of such a nature that its diplomacy to be successful must be based on the most subtle and literate comprehension of world realities, must be animated by a single rounded and consistent political philosophy, must be refined at its inception by the processes of private and intimate discussion, and must be executed in such a way as to permit maximum flexibility, instantaneous adaptation to changing world realities, delicate shifts of emphasis in response to new situations, and even operation with contradictory policies, deliberately and simultaneously, in order to permit the rapid exploitation of the shifting external scene.

Such a diplomacy cannot emanate from the workings of a great bureaucratic apparatus. It requires, necessarily and properly, too

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much of the personal, too much of the private, too much – if you will – of the conspiratorial to be conceived and implemented in this way. The chief executive is faced today with the choice of bypassing the regular apparatus both as a source of information and inspiration and as a channel of execution, or of foregoing effective diplomacy altogether and contenting himself with the monumental inflexibility, the philosophical shallowness, the ideological obscurity, and the unimaginative execution which the great organization ensures.

Up to this time, the tendency has been to compromise, giving the edge to the latter alternative. The result has been the situation we have today: a diplomacy that comes alive as and when the President can give it personal expression but is otherwise a diplomacy insensitive to external developments and stimuli; a diplomacy which speaks but scarcely hears; a diplomacy which, as a consequence of its own inertia and inflexibility, represents for other governments more of a topographical feature on the horizon of world affairs than a sensitive, reacting, and feeling partner in the great process of action and discussion that constitutes international life. Such a diplomacy is something other nations have to take into account as an important reality; it is not something they can hope to influence extensively by words and ideas.

And this is a shame; for words and ideas work both ways. America's self-centeredness and hardness of hearing hamper her effectiveness as a speaker in the councils of the world.

5. Conclusions

There can be no question but that the present size and complexity of the governmental apparatus are in part a response to real requirements and thus in part unavoidable. There has been a very considerable real increase in function. There can of course be no total return to the past. What has been written above should not be taken as in any way a denial of this fact.

A distinction must be drawn, furthermore, between essentially mechanical processes, such as the issuance of passports, where staffs can be and must be expanded to meet whatever the requirements may be, and purely intellectual processes, where bigness runs into the law of diminishing returns. Even here there is an important distinction to be observed between the process of intelligence-gathering and initial analysis, on the one hand, and the synthesis and final utilization of intelligence, on the other. For the first, large-scale

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organization is unquestionably essential, and it must admittedly draw on a large variety of technical skills and specialities. For the second, compactness and intimacy of association are necessary.

The problem narrows down, therefore, to the essentially intellectual processes of synthesis and evaluation of information available to the government and of the formulation and execution of high policy. And the question which it is intended to raise in this paper is whether for these processes the massive organization can be useful at all – whether, in fact, the attempt to solve problems in this field by large-scale organization does not rest on certain basic misunderstandings as to what can and cannot be accomplished by the working together of many people.

One would not have to go far to seek the origins of these misunderstandings. The past quarter of a century has seen the gradual and eventually overwhelming rejection by official Washington of the very concept of the diplomatic professional as a source of guidance for the organization of this work. The present pattern of organization is largely the work of wartime administrators using ideas borrowed from the armed forces or from business, in both of which fields the processes involved are largely mechanical rather than intellectual and in which there is room, or appears to be room, for utilization of great numbers of people selected solely on the basis of technical qualification, without much relation to their general qualities as human beings. I say "appears to be room," because I do not know whether here, too, this principle is not actually subject to limitations not readily visible to the outsider.

The evils of our present system for conducting external relations could be mitigated, if not entirely eliminated, by remedial measures taken just within the foreign affairs sector of government. A beginning could be made by the concentration in the hands of the Secretary of State of authority (under the President's direction) for the entire foreign affairs field, all civilian activity relating primarily to external affairs being subordinated to him. There could then be a much clearer and firmer allotment of responsibility and power right down the line, involving abandonment of the present negative-veto committee system, and a systematic assignment of individual operational authority, if necessary on an arbitrary basis, where specific questions bridged existing competencies. Personnel and security control could be restored to the normal chain of command, which would not mean that specialists would not be

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needed or that there would not be centralized, functional record-keeping procedures, but which would mean that these services would be used as adjuncts to the normal discipline of the work, not as competing empires. The foreign affairs work could be removed from the general civil service administration and organized, once more, in accordance with its own specific requirements. An end could be put to the effort to base a professional foreign affairs service – in the name of "democracy" – on educational and personal mediocrity, and a beginning could be made at the creation once more (it would take at least two decades to complete) of a professional service commensurate in quality with the tasks to be performed. All these things would help, though none would fully overcome the effect of contagion from the official environment in which this branch of the government has to exist.

Actually, it would be the height of irrealism to suppose that any of these measures will be – or could be – taken in the intellectual and official climate of the present epoch. For this, the misunderstandings are too deep, too ubiquitous, and too dearly held; in many instances the formal commitment to contrary courses has already been made; the vested interest in what now exists is far too great to permit of serious preoccupation with what ought to be. In the governmental machinery of the present day the American people have a commitment of relentless finality. No deliberate human hand will now dismantle it or reduce it to healthier dimensions. Only some form of catastrophe – natural disaster, financial collapse, or the atomic bomb – could have this effect.

The foreign affairs sector of government will remain, then, for the foreseeable future substantially what it is today. Of itself, it will tend even to continue to grow, for there will be continued growth in the functions to which it must address itself, and beyond this it will continue to breed activity internally, according to its own peculiar laws. This growth will find its limits at any given time in the readiness of Congress to provide funds. But regardless of what motions of investigation Congress may go through, its final decisions will not be based on any real effort at exact measurement of what is required to meet the demands in question. For this, the organization is already too vast, too impenetrable, too inscrutable; it is baffling no less to Congress than to anyone else. What is appropriated will represent in the last analysis a combination of what the congressmen have become accustomed to and what

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they feel they can provide in the face of competing demands. And the final product will continue, if past experience is any criterion, to grow greatly in times of crisis and to hold on to the bulk of its gains in the periods between.

This being the case, we must expect that the regular apparatus of the government will become, with time, of less and less value to President and Secretary of State as a source of intimate guidance and as a vehicle for the promulgation of policy in really delicate, important, and urgent situations. Increasingly, in situations of this sort, American statesmen will have to take refuge in a bypassing of the regular machinery and in the creation of *ad hoc* devices – "kitchen cabinets," personal envoys, foreign offices within foreign offices, and personal diplomacy – to ensure the intimacy of association, the speed, the privacy, and the expression of personal style essential to any effective diplomacy. This will always be in some degree demoralizing to the regular echelons of government, but not too much so, for many of the values of the regular apparatus are self-engendered in any case and are already separated from the reality of decision-taking by distances so great that a bit more or less makes little difference.

Both government and high policy will go on, then, much as they have in the past, but with a tendency toward increasing separation. Presidents, for want of suitable institutionalized assistance, will continue to improvise – some well, some less so. The muscle-bound bureaucracy will do its chores, some of which are important. It will continue to wage the endless, exhausting encounter with itself which is implicit in its over-intricate structure. Beyond this, it will continue as a unique educational institution second to none in its pedagogical effect – a place where, through the course of many frustrations and bewilderments, just close enough to responsibility to feel its bite but just far enough from it to be safe from real harm, many men may learn many things. They learn about world affairs; about how people are governed; about how people's interests can be represented; about how the human animal behaves in the political context. A few of them also learn something of the evils of large institutions as instruments of analysis, judgment, and discriminating execution in the field of foreign policy. Perhaps some day the number of those who learn this last lesson will grow to a point where they will rebel successfully against the jungle of superfluous relationships in which they are now confined.

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Individuality

The Meaning and Content of Individuality in Contemporary America

HENRY A. MURRAY

A YEAR ago, in line with an ancient tactic, I planted "individuality" in the soil of the subconscious, trustful that after several months of incubation nature would supply me with abundant produce. But on finally returning to this plot of earth, I found, to my dismay, no vegetation that would bring a penny in the public market. Strange, because individuality – the myth, the concept, and the word itself – has been, for many cycles of thought and talk, a generating symbol compact with drawing power.

The prospect of arriving at the date line empty-handed gave rise to a discomfort bordering on panic, and instead of persisting in my faith that the ground would render up the wanted stuff, I turned to friends. In doing so I demonstrated, as I see now, that in a crisis other-directedness can prevail even against a veteran resistance. At the moment of decision I was reminded that nowadays, if not always, everybody repeats with bantering minor variations what everybody repeats with bantering minor variations. Why be so proud as to refuse to join? Why not partake of this communion?

What I did was to transcribe and edit an evening's conversation between three old friends, Dy, Mo, and Si, which I instigated and unintrusively attended to:

Mo. Hasn't David Riesman said already or won't he say next month everything that is worth saying about individuality? Can we bring this drowned value back to life with a pulmotor of vocal air no matter how inspired? The day of individuality is done. I was a pallbearer at the funeral.

Dy. It isn't like you – staunch advocate of the indomitable will of man – to admit defeat. According to my core of values, it is ill-bred to stop fighting when you see that your cause is going under.

Mo. You can't strike your axe against the roots of a whole people. Accepting the obligatory is prophylaxis against the inroads of misanthropy.

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Si. Are you two assuming that you know a *real* individual when you see one and would agree in all of your pickings? Highly improbable. I have studied personalities for years in great detail and in each case found uniqueness; but I have never had occasion to cry "Eureka! *Here* is individuality." It is all a matter of degree and emphasis. As Kluckhohn put it: Every man is in certain respects like all other men, in certain respects like some other men, and in certain respects like no other man. Since the truth of this statement is self-evident, we must agree that everybody has some measure of uniqueness, distinctiveness, individuality. The question is, how common in our country today, compared with yesterday, are those who are unique to a significant degree in several significant respects? But the rub is that the respects which are significant to P may not be significant to D. There are so many ways in which a man may differ from the general run! He may be queerly featured, wear queer clothes, or have a queer speech or accent – be born with a harelip and a cleft palate. Or, he may be out of the ordinary in his tastes and hobbies – smoke nothing but Mexican cheroots and collect only pewter soup tureens. Or, he may cleave to very odd convictions – affirm that the world can be improved only by S-R conditionings of young children, having them taught to be nice with electric shocks in place of Hell and cheese in place of the milk and honeydew of Paradise. Or, a man may be unique in latching on to a peculiar anatomy of values or in feeling differently than others do when face to face with the totality of things. I could go on and on in this vein, but you already see my point. The issue is, what are the most relevant criteria and standards of individuality?

Mo. We can't waste time with surfaces and shows of individuality. There is only too much of those around. We must look for something deep, solid, and unobstrusive – the real McCoy. And that, I say, is gone.

Si. So *you* say. But first tell me whether you insist that individuality be taken as a good thing and that we must therefore disregard uniqueness among criminals, delinquents, neurotics, and psychotics? I have a cabinet full of case histories of unusual deviants and abnormals. The topic of the coming seminar, however, suggests that individuality is an acknowledged value, a value we are losing or in danger of losing. As you know, according to evolutionary theorists numberless variations, perhaps the majority of varia-

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tions, are deleterious to the organism, the society, or the species in which they first appear. We see this on all sides. In an average community of honest, intelligent, and friendly citizens, say, it will be the most dishonest, stupid, and unfriendly person who will vary most. Here will be your individual par excellence if degree of variation is your yardstick. The other day when I asked a superbly conventional old friend of mine to name twelve persons with decided individuality, everyone he mentioned was characterized by defects rather than by virtues. It seems that individuality in the opinion of a representative member of our culture consists of such traits as egotism, selfishness, eccentricity, exhibitionism, irrationality, irresponsibility, and downright cussedness, all adding up to a high nuisance quotient. What do you two mean by individuality?

Dy. I suggest that we exclude lower order variations from our definition of individuality. These appear to be increasing steadily.

Mo. And I suggest that we suspend the rule that discussants should define their terms. It is not possible to catch the crux of individuality, you must agree, in an agreeable net of words. But we have none the less been urged to talk about it, and since it is pleasanter to talk than to remain mute, we might as well come out with what comes up. Here is one version. An individual is self-substantial, a man who builds on his own genes for better or for worse, a man who would hate to be anybody but himself, a man who likes the flesh that sticks to his own ribs, a man who shows his natural face and does not care too much how others like it. An individual consults himself, waits for the inner lift or fall of feeling, the daemon's voice, the touch of ages, the dependable intimation, the vital omen, and consults others only at the end of his own wits. He is apt to find that an idea ceases to be interesting as soon as it is generally accepted. He is a man who expands with joy in the heart of an enchanted isolation. He is a hive of surprising thoughts and judgments; it is not easy to predict what he will say. He cuts through a lot of chatter and gets down to fundamentals quickly. And when it comes to the last ditch, he may, thinking of William Lloyd Garrison, proclaim, "I will be heard," or say "No in thunder," as Herman Melville put it. By the way, have you got the works of Thoreau in this library of yours?

(At this point I led Mo to my Thoreau shelf and then rejoined the others while he looked for some passage he but half recalled.)

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Dy. No in thunder. Sounds a little childish. In some infants "No" is the first understandable word to be pronounced. Negativism is social suggestibility in reverse.

Si. Which reminds me, Dy. Several studies have shown that college men of our day are much more inclined to say "Yes" than to say "No" to statements on a questionnaire, regardless of the content of the statements. And as a result of this great predominance of yea-sayers, many positive correlations among variables have been reported which, it now appears, do not indicate the relationships they first appeared to indicate. The determining factor is yea-saying or nay-saying. Now, according to recent results obtained by Couch and Keniston, the small minority of consistent nay-sayers are men of moderation, men who cannot subscribe to any extravagant or enthusiastic statement. Not one of them says No in thunder.

Mo. Excuse me, I didn't hear what you said. But let me interrupt a moment to read a couple of quotations from Thoreau which express, as in a parable, the essence of individuality as I envisage it. Listen to this: "The greater part of what my neighbors call good I believe in my soul to be bad, and if I repent of anything, it is very likely to be my good behavior. What daemon possessed me that I behaved so well?" Thus speaks the author of Gandhi's special inspiration, *Civil Disobedience.* The next one is even better: "In proportion as our inward life fails, we go more constantly and desperately to the post-office. You may depend on it, that poor fellow who walks away with the greatest number of letters, proud of his extensive correspondence, has not heard from himself this long while."

Si. Good enough. But we've been asked to talk about the individuality of our own time, to say whether we think it has been going up or going down these last decades.

Mo. Going, going, gone. That's my point. There are no Thoreaus today. No one enjoys hearing from himself in solitude.

Si. Come now, Mo. You admitted that there is no generally agreeable definition of individuality, and so, since we don't know what it is exactly, we can't measure its decline or be sure of its decease. Conceivably we might examine samples of the population of the United States and attempt to measure, in a multiplicity of ways, the range or spread of differences in respect to certain selected variables. Then we might compare our findings with the results

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obtained in 1900 and in 1925 and come to some tentative conclusions about recent trends. But no such estimates exist for 1900 or 1925, and the merit of a procedure of this sort is very dubious. Anyhow, it has not been undertaken in a systematic manner, and, so far as I know, no social scientist is contemplating such a study. In short, it is quite impossible to say anything on this issue that deserves serious attention. Whoever speaks on it must base his opinion on an extremely small sample of impressions, most of them secondhand, and ten to one he will be telling you more about himself – his predilections, the people that he sees, and the books that he has read – than he will about the health of individuality in these United States.

Mo. Oh, that wet blanket of social science, methodology, damping the fires of good talk! Glad I abandoned chemistry. Glad I'm now an architect suckled in a creed outworn. But, then, when you come right down to it, what is more fun than airing one's half-suffocated predilections? I'm game. Aren't you?

Si. Sure. But I would like to know, first of all, why you think individuality is declining in America. What do you think, Dy?

Dy. Declining, because David Riesman says so. The killers of individuality have already been convicted. They have made *Time*, *Life*, and *Fortune*. Do you want the textbook inventory? Urbanization, mechanization, structuralization, bureaucratization, departmentalization, specialization, system –

Mo. Skip it. All that is accepted. But dig down a bit, go back to the plain language of Charles Peirce, language that is intolerable to most people of our time. He said what we are too ashamed or too polite to say, namely, that greed is the taproot from which this society gains its huge momentum. Charles Peirce, by the way, was an individualist of the first magnitude. Combined with greed, it seems to me, is the suspicion, despite contrary secret hopes and pious sentences, that there is no higher life in store for us in heaven, and, consequently, all desired upward locomotion must be achieved before death closes the account, some years before, in fact, so as to allow time for the enjoyment of whatever elevation a man has been able to attain. Thus speed is of the essence. The result is hectic greed embracing the machine as the quickest and surest means to a secular beatitude, a villa in Florida, let us say. The objects of greed's craving being imbedded in the earth – fertilities of all kinds, coal, oil, and minerals – this good earth, great Mother of us all,

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ground of our very being, becomes the target of our importunate and aggressive zeal. We level her forests, despoil her soil of its fecundities, assail her abdomen with our bulldozers, tear her womb apart, and seize with frantic lustful hands her stores and stores of substance, draw off her fluid energies, and then leave, in place of her fair skin, a covering of dust, ashes, slag, and devastation. Finally, in blasphemy, we cancel her incomparable beauty with the most hideous advertisements of her products fashioned to the public taste.

Si. Greed is not limited to Americans. It is as old as the human race. And in this country it is balanced by an extraordinary generosity. But what has all this got to do with individuality?

Mo. I'm coming to that and it's nothing new to you. For everyone can see that in the course of this partnership between machines and men, the two become mutually influential and dependent: Machines produce men in their own image and men produce machines in *their* own image, and pretty soon it is difficult to decide Who's Who in America, who deserves credit for the work and who deserves credit for the thinking in this great web of humanized mechanics and mechanized humanics. Anyhow, a requirement for this speed of greed is frictionless co-operation, co-operation which approaches the perfection of a fine engine. Hence individuality is out of place — sand in the ball bearings — and we get the sapless men whose souls and wives are bought and paid for by the giant corporation, and when the successful pair eventually reaches Florida or California, it finds another giant mechanism arranged to deal out pleasure with merry-go-rounds of gaudy, barren entertainment. Being too tired and too automatized to find their own ways to joy, the two of them turn for stimulation to these paltry and expensive shows of culture. That's the gist of it.

Si. Personally I think you're way off base, dreaming a dream of a dream of a distemper. Is it the bourbon or have you become inebriated by your own mixed and blended metaphors?

Mo. It's your serious behavioral-science face which instigates my thalamus to hop, skip, and jump this way. But don't be so stodgy as to think that your ponderous jargon can convey the palpable realities any better than my outdated rhetoric. Anyhow didn't you rule that we should air our personal bents and biases?

Si. Sure. It's okay by me. But I think we should discuss how it comes about that the giant corporations find so many docile candidates for automation. How can we explain the susceptibility

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to regimentation which results in the Organization Man as William Whyte describes him – the sincere tie and the bribed wife? Most of my colleagues believe that the preparation process starts in infancy. Mrs. Snooks is assured that a solitary child is an unpromising child. If he is not encouraged to be sociable he may fail to get along and get ahead. At the worst he may be heading for schizophrenia, or, if not that, alienation and a marginal existence. Kindergarten teachers are of the same mind. They take hold of Sammy Snooks, and, after a season of tears and nay-saying, induce him to participate day after day in peer activity. Everything he does is judged in terms of its effect on the mood and harmony of the All. Pretty soon Sammy will be announcing to his parents that *all* the boys are allowed to do this or that and so he should be allowed to do it too. Few parents have anything that will stand pat when faced by this announcement, false though it may be. Do they want to have their children suffer ostracism because of being different from their playmates? Are they equipped as parents to shoulder the responsibility for that amount of young humiliation? No. And so emancipation occurs much earlier than it did, say, fifty years ago. It occurs before the child has been able to establish a steady character of his own, and what he does with all the others of his age is to form a kind of personality which is responsive to every current of collective feeling, emanating, in most cases, from the more spontaneous, confident, and aggressive members of the gang. Lacking an inner guiding conscience, each becomes fearfully dependent on the All for direction, justification, and security; and when, later on, after school and college, one of the more ambitious ones – possibly just married and in need of cash – goes to some corporation for a job, he has nothing in himself alone which is solid enough to keep him true when he meets the prescribed formulas and rituals. He succumbs step by step, as Marquand has so accurately portrayed for us, and in due course wakes up one morning to the fact that he has reached the point of no return. This, in brief, is the conclusion of the social scientists who go along with Riesman. But, as I see it, the majority are conformists, by definition; and where, pray, are conformists better placed than in giant corporations?

Mo. Si, I believe I can convert you to my opinion. You have already indicated that there are no real individuals today because parents make their babies play with other babies as soon as they

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can toddle. Growing up in company, at school and after school outside their homes, they remain amorphous – like interpenetrating colloids without membranes – no one knowing exactly where his self begins or ends and other selves leave off or start. No shells are built and so the heat of life becomes dispersed and, in accordance with the Second Law, as I recall, entropy increases; and eventually everyone begins to feel lukewarm and lonely and hurries here and there in quest of warmth through social contacts. But there is no real warmth available, only bright shows of warmth – a hearty greeting, a synthetic smile, and a heartier farewell, with some talk of contacts in the future. Today the strategy of sociability is that of hit and run, a transit of rapid interactions. Differentiation is impossible without privacy, without solitude, without a heat-and-thought-retaining shell. One has to learn to stoke his own furnace, to keep the home fires burning, in cycles of excitement and quiescence, if individuality and creativity are to flourish. Colloidal men are running things today – a lot of good guys talking and laughing with each other, in factories, in lunchrooms, in committee rooms, round the cabinet table – everyone in conference with everyone but himself. These conferences are jolly because everyone has learned the art of reaching pseudoagreements by avoiding basic issues. But all that is distinctive, sensitive, and excellent is leveled down and cheapened, and mediocrity takes over more oppressively than a tyrant, because it's everywhere at once and therefore cannot be attacked and because it operates, as termites do, by gnawing away at one's foundations. I don't except myself. I engage in endless rounds of trivial exchanges. Indeed I relish them and like to see and to be seen, to hear and to be heard, through any medium. I suspect I am already more than half corroded and am very near to being a superfluous, dispensable, and unnecessary duplicate. Most of us prefer large plate glass windows, open doors, and open faces, partly because we are half hollow and have so little in our depths to cherish and keep secret. Please stop me! So much catharsis may be enervating.

Si. Let me speak! I've listened long enough. Mo, you're getting further and further from reality. I wholly disagree with you. Who is blind around here? Don't you see what I see, a tremendous output of really vital variation in this country? Take Darwin's formula for evolution: "Multiply, vary, and be strong." Has any state or nation, weighed in these scales, ever equaled the United States of

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America today? We have an unprecedented rate of reproduction, unprecedented industrial and military strength, and, to my eyes, an unprecedented degree of variation. The never-equaled mixture of peoples in this country assures us of the maximal amount of genetical variation, the greatest differences, one might say, among the potential selves to be evolved and actualized. Also our culture permits a rare degree of freedom of choice in respect to place of residence, marriage, vocation, clothes, mode of speech, and so forth, and our unprecedented level of family economics makes it possible for individuals in great numbers to take advantage of these opportunities. Finally, every American youth is presented with individuality as an ideal. He is both expected and encouraged to become self-reliant, self-sufficient, independent – to act on his own and take responsibility for the consequences. Thus genes, ideal, and opportunity all are favorable to the development of individual variations.

Mo. May I break in?

Si. If you have to. But it seems to me you have been ticking quite a bit this evening.

Mo. I just felt compelled to say before you went on further that if too much freedom, too much opportunity come too young, children blow off steam in noisy futile ways, and this short-circuits or cuts out the salty inner growth which is the very bone of individuation. Americans run after every opportunity to spend and to be spent; they are eager to go everywhere and see everything; they want to meet and get along with everybody and to know what everybody is doing or about to do. They are as keen to see the worst as they are to see the best – more drawn to the worst, in fact. The result is an hypertrophy of tolerance, loss of the ability to identify the meretricious, and, finally, the movement of all high and low values to a common level. If individuality means anything, it means the discovery of one's own peculiar, rooted preferences, the acceptance of the best of these, and enough aplomb to say: *That* thing, *that* person, *that* book, *that* play, *that* idea – whatever it may be – is not within my pale. Americans are defective in their power to refuse, to refuse the second-rate. They want everything and as much as they can get of it and so come out with thousands of little bits and pieces out of which no coherent picture can be made. Also, as Charles Morris has shown, Americans are not disposed to select for themselves any one of several self-consistent philos-

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ophies of life. They want to include in their careers something from every one of them, no matter how disparate. In short, what I am saying here is that numerous opportunities for free choice provided at a very early age, combined with the ideal of independence, encourage superficial exhibitions of individuality and thereby check the evolution of more significant variation. Now I'll shut up.

Si. Mo, your eye is in your mind, and so it fails to catch and hold what's going on around you. I am less introverted, and as I look about these days, my eyes inform me of originality bubbling and brimming over from a thousand springs. It is most evident, of course, in science, technology, and business. In fact, the enormous acceleration of inventiveness presents a problem of the first order: our physical and material environment is being changed so rapidly that our natural capacity for adjustment is already seriously overstrained. If a social philosopher were asked to judge, he would have to say that today there is too much rather than too little creativity.

Mo. Come now, you can't rest your case for individuality on the march of techniques, the triumphs of mass production. Give your awards to the machine, not to human personality. Individuality is the property of a few persons *qua* persons, but not of instruments. The question is: In your trips across the country, do you ever meet people who astonish you? People who give voice to tastes, ideas, beliefs that you have not heard a dozen times, a hundred times, before?

Si. Certainly I do. But now I am pointing to something else, individuality of thought running into science and its applications. Take man's new artificial organs, servomechanical systems, information systems, logical thinking systems, transmission systems, et cetera, et cetera – products of a veritable epidemic of creativeness. The outcome is not a new biological man or a new social man, but a multiplicity of new sociomechanical units, each composed of a small group of specialists in harmony with a delicate and supremely intelligent, handsome instrument. These astonishing emergents are resultants of numerous individual flights of thought, more particularly of the mental processes that produced the science of cybernetics, and these particular mental processes, you can't deny, are part and parcel of a highly distinctive personality. Let us say that we have reached an era when man's formative powers are going into works rather than into self. People seem to feel that

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each self must be trained and ready to respond from moment to moment, like a servomechanism, to the novel situations that result from all these novel works.

Mo. Si, you are painting a picture that is more appalling than anything I have read in the Apocalypse. You are telling us that the agent of creative evolution is no longer a man of extraordinary worth, but a superb instrument serviced by a team of robots. May the best team win, and may the nation with the best mechanism of best teams win! This time I surrender unconditionally. Not to a band wagon but to a sociomech. I'm going to buy myself a trailer capable of spontaneous locomotion, fill it with a complete complement of artificial organs – everything but heart and sex glands – and then teach my wife to implant purposes, both immediate and ultimate, into the assemblage of organs and see if we, as an emergent unity, cannot go places and see things in Tierra del Fuego. But where is individuality in all this? In the servomechanism with its distinctive final purpose?

Si. Mo, you remind me of Miniver Cheevy, child of scorn, who loved the days of old and sighed for what was not. In your case it is a Walden Pond complex that engenders detestation of every technical invention since the steam engine. Your genes arranged themselves for living in another age. Bad timing, old boy. You were born too late, not made to appreciate the marvels of physical science. But how about the social sciences, psychology and sociology? Do you deny that creativity of a profound and revolutionary sort occurred in the minds of such individuals as Freud and Jung? Would you not admit that their thoughts and writings have radically changed our views of man and of society? I have often heard you use words that signify things which were undreamed of before their day.

Mo. I suppose I must admit all that. But I notice that you went to Europe for your illustrations of profound revolutionary thought. Can you imagine Freud in Pittsburgh or Jung in a suburb of St. Louis? I don't know much more than what I have picked up from you; but the impression I have gained is that the social sciences in America are bent on obliterating the individual. What would you say, Dy?

Dy. I see what you mean. Social science looks for uniformities in order to arrive at laws or general statements, each of which is more or less true or probable. Thus, in the last analysis it is a

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matter for statistics to decide. The biggest part an individual can play is to count one, either in confirming or in disconfirming some hypothesis to be tested. A disconfirmist is an annoyance, sometimes a severe frustration, to a behavioral scientist, the success of whose endeavor depends on the discovery of regularity. One might say that an unaccountable disconfirmist is to science what an unmanageable nonconformist is to Mrs. Grundy or to government. Laws in both cases are constructed to apply to all, but only a majority abide by them. The illegal minorities are excluded from science as well as from society. Anyhow, the march of the behavioral sciences in America seems to be away from studies of differentiated individuals and toward the discovery of majority trends, dominant patterns, cultural norms, et cetera, et cetera. Numerous variant patterns are inevitably disregarded, and this means that excellence is disregarded, since this, by definition, is too rare to add up to an impressive figure. Thus quality disappears as quantity takes over. Furthermore, the publication of these findings, with their emphatic expositions of confirmist patterns, results in still more confirmity, because there are always so many people who want to go along with the majority. It is even conceivable that the mere announcement of a fictitious social law would be enough to make it true in a few years. Having never thought of this before, I am reminded of the young girl who said: "How do I know what I think until I have heard what I have said?" Anyhow, the sheer flow of words seems to have brought me to the notion that the social sciences may be one determinant of the decay of individuality.

Si. I see that both of you have missed the point. My contention is that there is more variation and originality, more individuality, than there ever has been in this country, but that many fail to recognize it because it is appearing in new and unfamiliar guises. In the first place, as I said before, it takes the form of creativity, inventiveness, ingenuity, going into works rather than into self. In the second place, it occurs frequently in groups, small congenial groups. For example, not only have scientists learned that co-operation is required for the solution of most problems, but they have come upon a way of thinking fruitfully in company. There is still a great deal of individual, solitary contemplation; yet it might be said that within the last twenty years the group has become the carrier of life, the unit of variation, the spearhead of evolution.

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A group can have individuality. In the third place, today uniqueness is not limited to a few outstanding persons; it is more evenly distributed. Instead of a dozen isolated peaks rising from a flat plain of commonplaceness, we see a great number of hills and a few mountains, a thrilling range of heights, something like the Alleghenies. When people recall the American past in this connection they are apt to think of a few rare wonders – Emerson, Thoreau, Melville, Whitman – and such tough veterans of self-assertion as John Brown of Osawatomie. But they forget the enormous incubus of conventionality that burdened the contemporaries of these men. Today we may have fewer snow-capped Matterhorns of individuation, but we have a multitude of Snowdons and Mt. Washingtons. Have either of you ever tried to push your way through the magazines and secondary literature of America from the Revolution to World War I? There is not one distinctive taste or scent from start to finish. Style is the acid test. For it is among writers that one expects to find the clearest symptoms of individuality, men who are free agents by profession, men whose very livelihood depends on originality. And if you say that nineteenth century authors of the second and third order curbed their imaginative powers because they knew that originality would not bring in bread, then my point is proved. In the nineteenth century even appreciators of individuality were scarce as black swans. Today, on the other hand, there are countless books, plays, magazines – even newspapers – in which one finds fresh, animating phrases and novel ways and modes of thought that are as wine to the spirit. Indeed, they come in such abundance that we forget they were not there from the beginning. But now I think I have some data, a few twigs of evidence to support my argument. Excuse me while I get my brief case. I left it with my coat and hat.

Mo. There is one image of individuality which comes to mind quite often. I received it from Samuel Butler, an individual in his own right: "Life is like playing a solo in public and making up the music as you go along."

Dy. Yes, I like that one. Three or four centuries before Butler a man did not have to piece together his own music. He was content, yes, proud, to play as one member of an orchestra the sublimest music of the West, the music of the celestial choir transmitted to him by pope, priest, or pastor. But after the Age of reason and revolutions, a man of stature felt that it was up to him to

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make up something for a solo. Today he is not called upon to make this effort. It is done by little groups in a condition of *participation mystique*, swaying as one body to the music of the mass media. By the way, when we were talking about groupism and peerism a little while back, we should have stressed the fact that most of our teen-age aggregates are, in large part, bound together by an antiauthoritarian, antifather compact, like the GI culture of World War II. This, I believe, is of profound significance. After World War I, in conjunction with antiauthoritarian and antifather sentiments, came strong currents of antipathy against puritan and Victorian morality, against God the Father, especially the Father-Son motif, and, indeed, against the expression of any of our world's once elevating and inspiring ideals. Within a few years scores of slang words were born – eyewash, boloney, and many cruder ones – which voiced the contempt of the younger generation of those days for all the shining statements which had heartened the endeavors of Americans since the founding of this country. The GI's would not say they were fighting to make the world safe for democracy or anything of the sort. To them, that was nothing but boloney. They fought because they were drafted and they fought for self-respect and for the respect of their company of buddies and, generally speaking, with the minimum of manifest respect for the whole tribe of officers. Perhaps this may be attributed, in part, to the fact that first-generation children have had to repudiate, so far as possible, the authority – the old ways, modes of speech, discipline, religion, and so forth – of their non-American fathers in order to get along and get ahead in school. Anyhow, we have today a population of young people who are solidly individualistic in at least one sense: They are not disposed to see anything that deserves reverence or to feel that there is anything higher than their own interests or to respond to any statement which seems to call for selfless effort. Anaerobic organisms, I would say, for whom the oxygen of age-old inspiration is of no avail. But enough of that. Here is Si with an armful of granite data.

Si. Not much in the way of evidence, merely a few pebbles. But, as Dy knows, I have been reading the autobiographies of college men for almost thirty years, more than a thousand of them. And I have gained the impression that individuality is more evident than it used to be at this age. I happened to be carrying home a few autobiographies which were handed to me today, and glancing at

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the section in which the student gives some account of his philosophy of life, I noted a good many statements that accord with my previous impression. Let me see now. O Lord, the first one illustrates the opposite, groupism, I suppose.

The greatest joy and the greatest meaning seem to be the results of interaction with other people – this existence in the group is the realest thing we know.

But that one is exceptional. Let me read a few others at random, each from a different student:

Real freedom only comes in divorcing oneself from others. In the group the individual tends to become an amalgam of many people, beliefs, wants.

There is no philosophy worth having save that which one arrives at himself.

The vilest thing that can happen to a person is the subjugation of his will to another person.

I do not consider my state of happiness, real or imagined, to be in any way dependent on or related to what I think of other people or what they think of me.

Whether I ever go to Alaska or not depends on whether or not I feel the Southwest has become too tame. Wherever I live, though, I shall always stand for complete freedom and self-sufficiency of the individual.

My philosophy of life, in general, is live and let live. That is, I'll do what I want and other people can do what they want, and neither of us should give unwanted interference to the other.

Independence shows that one has sufficient knowledge to pick with discrimination. Of course, I mean unpretentious independence, for it reflects imagination.

The only meaning that an individual can find in life is the meaning that he creates in his own separate existence.

There must be a solemn trust with the will, that no backsliding into outwardly determined values will occur.

I want to touch the solid ground of unvarnished reality and sheer stark existence, instead of wasting time on the tinny superstructure of society, and perhaps adding an ornament to it.

The doctrine that I preach is of independence, independence from other people, places, institutions.

Mo. Of course your samples are not representative of the country at large. All of them are written by Harvard undergraduates. Furthermore, they are avowals of an ideal, part of a philosophy of life, and, as I have often heard you say, sentiment and action may be exactly opposite. In the United States we have had the myth

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of individuality from away back and also, in some measure, individuality in practice. But now only the myth remains, so far as I can see.

Si. You seem intent on reminding us that you were a pallbearer at a funeral, despite the fact that we have pretty much agreed that the features of individuality are not readily distinguishable. I suspect that the body you interred was that of your singularly favored type, the I-am-the-captain-of-my-soul type, and that you have overlooked other types, the types which are prevalent today. For example, one uniformity running through this last collection of autobiographies and philosophies is a high degree of self-centeredness. One can find no intimations of the prospect of deriving happiness through self-forgetful work or through dedication to a cause. Each writer is for himself, first and foremost, although a large proportion say that the greatest satisfactions come from interacting with their fellows. They do not think of themselves as citizens, as parts of a larger whole, as members of a world community, or as carriers of culture. Effort, as they see it, will be devoted to the satisfaction of their private needs. Isn't this one type or one index of individuality? All of them implicitly or explicitly affirm that the self, every self, is of supreme worth and that each person is wholly responsible for his own self and only for his own.

Mo. That fits in quite well with what Dy was saying while you were looking for your papers. He called them anaerobic because they lived and preferred to live without the oxygen of edifying words and poetry, words implying reverence or sacrifice. But I wouldn't favor correlating individuality with egotism. Self-love is universal. Its great strength is taken for granted in the second of the two great commandments: Love thy neighbor as thyself. This would be a mean injunction if self-love were feeble or inconstant. But, anyhow, individuality is not mere self-centeredness in my books. It is not the insubordination of a child or the hell-raising of an adolescent. That would be individuality of a lower order, the species we are disregarding. Higher-order individuality is a veritable accomplishment, closely related to the development of identity as Erikson describes it in his incomparable manner. Dy, what is your audit?

Dy. To tell the truth, individuality as a value, as a boast, as a stead for pride, strikes me, in certain moods, as naïve, shallow, and pretentious. It lacks the depth dimension. As an ideal it plays a strategic role, no doubt, during those years in a young man's life

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when he must discover his own nature, select a vocation appropriate to his talents, and, in so doing, grow in a differentiated way out of the family husk in which he was imbedded and out of the colloidal matrix, as Mo calls it, of his adolescent peer group. But, beyond that, it is too apt to lead on to illusory self-inflations, false poses, and counterfeit aggrandizements, tumors of the ego. The individualist says "I" with a special stress and accent. "*I* did this. *I* did that," always "*I*," as if he had never come upon the fact that he could not do any of these things without the participation of nature and also, in most cases, of other people. It does not seem that he has ever humbly acknowledged that he is pretty nearly powerless vis-à-vis his own body and vis-à-vis the greater part of his personality and mind. He is not able to decide that the heart shall keep on beating. He is not able to decide that a plentiful supply of energy and enthusiasm will be available next morning. He is not able to decide to fall in love. He is not able to decide that fresh and significant ideas shall spring to mind to enliven his conversation or to advance his thought. He cannot choose to choose what he will choose. From first to last he is utterly dependent for his being, for the capacity to sense, feel, think, and act, for the delight of living, upon the perfect orchestration of billions of uncontrollable, irreversible, and inscrutable goings on within him. And yet his objective knowledge of these facts does not bring him round to wisdom. He takes it all for granted: accepts it without reverence, without gratitude, and without grace. The fault, as I see it, lies in a kind of hydrocephalus of the ego. The ego shouts, "I am the master of my fate!" and a minute later one tiny embolus slits the thinspun life and puts an end to all that nonsense.

Si. I don't get the stroke of your thought. Are you saying anything less trite than the fact that the mind is dependent on the body: no brain, no consciousness?

Dy. You blunt my point. I am saying, or trying to say, that one necessary experience on the path to a mature felicity is full acknowledgment of our utter and unutterable dependence upon nature, within us and without, the sun, the earth and all that it contains, and upon each other. Acknowledgment of this in one's very marrow gives rise to that cluster of feelings — wonder, awe, reverence, gratitude, prayerfulness, and hope — which constitute the passion-center of religion, the passion-center, I would say, of the best lives in their profounder workings. Here the myth of individuality is

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a hindrance. Its high place in the American scale of values may, indeed, be one determinant of our emotional retardation, our perpetual juvenility, and, more recently, of our deficiency of first-order admirations, our incapacity for high seriousness.

Mo. It seems to me we've gone around the clock with our conception of individuality. All the individuals in my hall of fame were marked by an unusual capacity for reverence, for first-order admirations, and for high seriousness. This was the very thing which brought them forth. It was in the name of their admirations that they spoke out and held their ground against hell and high water. Now you are telling us that the ideal of individuality is an impediment to such loyalties.

Dy. Yes. It seems that I have talked myself into a contradiction. How can we explain it? It might be due to the fact that in the old days individuality emerged as an ideal after a young man had acquired conscience, character, and the habits of reverence and seriousness; and so when he cried, "I will be heard," he was more likely to have something valuable to say and fight for. Nowadays, the idea of individuality comes up much earlier. It starts and gains momentum at the breakfast table when the boy of four, with nothing of great moment in his head, shouts, "I will be heard," and his father pipes down and listens to him. Later, the boy's individuality includes resistance, sometimes apathy and affectlessness, toward nearly everything parents or teachers may present to him as worthy of their devotion. Could we say, Mo, that in the past individuality was based on a commitment to an ideal bigger than itself, whereas today it is founded on the refusal to accept the yoke of any such commitment?

Mo. The distinction seems valid. But I would call today's thing "egotism," as I said earlier, rather than "individuality." I don't see anything commendable in apathy and listlessness, or in acts of arrogance and violence, or in boastful and boisterous displays. When the brash fellow finally gets the floor, nothing comes out of him that is worth attending to.

Si. I must interrupt here, if you don't mind, to tell you the story of an undergraduate which illustrates your point — someone speaking from an empty mind. He told me that for ten years he had enjoyed a recurrent fantasy of his standing on a high hill and addressing a multitude of people. When I asked him what he said to them, he was abashed and replied that this had never occurred to

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him. His fantasy did not include ideas or spoken words, but the multitude were spellbound none the less. But, Dy, please go on with what you were saying a while back.

Dy. I was discussing the myth of individuality as a juvenile illusion which lacks the depth and time dimension, lacks imagination and perspective. Take, for example, the type of individualist who privately or publicly boasts of his maturity, his degree of self-development, much as if the newborn child, vaunting in its first thrill of dawning consciousness, cried, "Look at me! Look what I have done! Look at this body and this soul that I have formed and shaped!" I'll admit, of course, that every child and every adult is unique. But to a far greater extent he is acting out a part from birth to death which nature and society long ago composed for him. Probe down a layer. Is it not clear that in a very real sense the growth, continuation, and decline of every one of us is a recurrence, a recapitulation, a repeat performance, of a drama that is ancient as the hills, ancient in its concatenations of basic thematic patterns, despite innumerable variations in the expression and execution of these patterns? Seen in this light, the individualist's belief that his dispositions and decisions are his own and that the course of his life is determined largely by the knowledge he acquires and the choices he makes among alternatives – this belief eventually loses its sustaining power and one comes to the far richer conception of an underlying myth, full of warmth and wonder, which one is living out as part of the evolutionary process. This realization is very rare today for obvious reasons, one being the absence of fitting symbolic sagas exemplifying roles. How many of us are capable of making up a widely relevant form of music for ourselves in progress? There are scores of new old myths waiting impatiently for poet-authors, as Keats half knew when he spoke of soul-making and of Shakespeare's life as allegory; but, unhappily, our poets are all engaged with chaos. In the meanwhile, many of us are starving without knowing it, living on half a lung and half a heart.

Mo. Are you wavering? You seem to be describing my notion of individuality, not its opposite. I thought your intention was to point out the limitations of individuality as an ideal.

Dy. No and Yes. By my lights, individuality is something to be built for the sake of something else. It is a structure of potential energies for expenditure in the service of an idea, a cultural endeavor, the betterment of man, an emergent value. I am proposing

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that an individual self is made only to be lost – that is, only to pledge itself to some enterprise that is in league with a good future, and thereby find itself once more, but this time as the actor of a living myth, an instrument of culture.

Si. You admit that the thing you're talking about is very rare. Shouldn't we, then, omit it from our present survey?

Dy. I suppose Yes. But I would like to register a protest against the exclusion of everything which does not sum up to a big figure. If we adopted that policy we would be restricting ourselves to the most commonplace phenomena. For example, a survey that left out the artists of America – and by artists, I mean poets, novelists, playwrights, painters, and musicians – would, in my opinion, be seriously unbalanced. Destiny has brought us to the position of top power among the free nations of the world, and heretofore top power has consisted not only of the greatest military strength and material resources, but of a high level of civilization, a center of humanistic and artistic excellence to which people have been drawn for refreshment, enchantment, and invigoration. The question is: where do we stand in these respects in the eyes of those nations of whose friendship and respect we are not unreasonably desirous? Way below normal expectations. In this country, I would say, one can discern two opposite yet interdependent currents of events. The first is the more obvious one described by Si: a tremendous amount of energy and creativeness engaged in science, in technology, in industry, and in business generally. In these spheres of activity, cooperation is essential, and the variant individual, qua individual, is very apt to be a misfit. There are, however, abundant opportunities in all parts of these enterprises for individual thought, especially when directed toward technical innovations and improvements. But all this massive material productivity is peripheral, as I view it, to the good life, and its tremendous rate of growth, accelerated by a cynical, nerve-wracking, and relentless barrage of advertising, its very success in supplying creature comforts, its penetration into every sphere of action, is canceling the possibilities of a good life. It is without heart and without taste. I call it peripheral, because it is concerned with means without definition of desirable final ends, with strategies in the absence of a vision, with tactics in a value-vacuum. At the center, in the hearts of men, things are going in the opposite direction, or what appears to be the opposite direction. Here one finds – in place of zest, integration, and construction – anxiety, neu-

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rosis, apathy, alienation, distrust, regression, and despair. As always, it is the artists and the poets who set forth most accurately the inner human situation, a condition of which the rest of us may not become aware for two or three decades. But by now we are all familiar with the thesis which the great majority of our better writers have been steadily representing to us, namely, that things fall apart, as Yeats expressed it; the center cannot hold. In other words, Siva is dancing in the phase of dissolution and destruction rather than in the formative phase, and artists in legions are devoting their talents to his service. And they are alone no longer. For nowadays pretty nearly everybody is consumed with interest in discord, violence, and deterioration — in the Blackboard Jungle, teen-age crimes, gangster warfare, psychopathic personalities, idiots, the Mad Bomber, polymorphous sexuality, rape, suicide, infantile complexes, schizophrenia, the Snake Pit, cacophony in music, fragmentations of the human figure in painting, decorticated he-man heroes in works of fiction, four-letter words, alcoholics, dope fiends, and numberless other deviations from fruitful ways of life. And, peculiarly enough, physical scientists are concerned, in their own domain, with the decay of nuclei and elementary particles, nuclear fissions and explosions, asymmetry, and an endless succession of genodical weapons.

Si. You sound like one of Jehovah's Witnesses relishing the prospect of Armageddon in the offing. Aren't you drifting away from our objective?

Dy. Possibly. But I am a physician, and physicians, by temperament and training, are perpetually alert to signs of present or potential illness. No matter how ruddy the patient's complexion, how bright the eyes, how supple the muscles, a physician never fails to put his stethoscope to heart and lungs. And so when I examine society I always listen to the sounds that art makes, and the sounds I have been hearing over the last years inform me of a state that is the exact opposite of the outward appearance of that robust energetic giant named American Materialism. It is a state of profound antipathy to the whole works, not to one or another aspect of the system, such as bureaucracy or regimentation, but to the basic assumptions and evaluations which underlie the entire show. One large determinant of the artist's repugnance and estrangement must be that the giant is oblivious of his existence and oblivious of his values and that the spread of the giant's tentacles and the

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spread of uglification go hand in hand. Anyhow, admiration, which, according to Thomas Mann, is art's most indispensable emotion, is all but absent in America. "Where it is not, where it withers, nothing more sprouts, all is arid and impoverished." And so our novelists and playwrights occupy themselves with exhibitions of derision and disgust or in skillfully portraying for us the most sordid conditions and the most debased expressions of human impulse. Endless demonstrations and analyses of social pathology coming from the most prosperous nation in the world: What can others think of us? Since there are similar resonating dispositions in large numbers of the reading and theater-going public, some of these writers, though profoundly at odds with their world, have been richly remunerated by their world and a very few, like T. S. Eliot, have won in their own lifetime a degree of esteem bordering on idolatry. What can we say about the kind of individuality that is manifested by these artists, as well as by many others of the same stamp, would-be artists or appreciators – the disinherited and alienated isolates, Ishmaels, and existentialists in our midst? This, I would judge, is a problem by itself, too intricate to be dealt with in this context.

Mo. Well, it seems that we've anatomized as much of this matter as we can tonight. But, Dy, I still can't understand why you dispraise my type of individuality.

Dy. Besides the reasons I have given, it is because your type of individuality on a national scale means either isolationism or imperialism or, if not these, a degree of nationalism which is too possessive and too proud to relinquish enough sovereignty to allow for the effective operation of world law, world government, and world police force – the only possible enduring safeguard against a holocaust of mutual extermination. Of course, the huge paranoid obstacle to world fellowship is Communism, with its implacable ambitions and outrageous stratagems; but our cause is greatly weakened, I believe, by the absence of any announced plan of global unity. Furthermore, I conjecture that the next stage of spiritual development will be inaugurated by another trinity – the Holy Ghost uniting Man and Woman. Your type of individuality is an impediment to both of these saving consummations.

Si. On the tip of my tongue for the last ten minutes has been the observation that we have talked for a whole evening without once referring to the larger half of our population. Surely, you can't

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deny that individuality among women has increased by leaps and bounds since World War I. I could cite scores of notable examples and, if need be, rest my whole case there. But, before we break up, I would like to call attention to a little ground for Dy's surmise. We have collected hundreds of the wish-fulfilling fantasies of undergraduates in an unsystematic way for over twenty years and in a systematic way since 1953, and we have noted, first of all, a marked decline of economic success themes. Our returns show that the three most prevalent positive fantasies today are those of perfect marriage, children, and sexual conquests, in that order. Next come self-sufficiency, benevolent power, public display of intellectual eminence, and athletic glory. The Horatio Alger myth is below all of them in frequency. These results are in accord with Allport's studies of students' imaginary autobiographies from the present to the year 2000. In striking contrast to students in a dozen other countries, Americans at different colleges do not imagine themselves participating in great enterprises or devoting their energies to some superpersonal goal, either political or cultural. They dream of economic security, a house and a plot of land in the country, a happy family, and peace for a lifetime.

At this point it seemed to me that my friends had had enough and so I asked them for a summary.

Si. Although we have been talking in a vacuum of facts and definitions, my convictions remain unshaken, namely, that individuality among women is on the increase and that individuality of thought going into science, technology, and industry has never even approximated its present level. America is seething with creativity of many sorts.

Mo. Much of what Si is celebrating is not individuality in the proper sense. It is either intellectual originality, technical inventiveness, or blatant masquerades – a ceaseless flood of talk and clamor from a dozen media, a mammoth pageant of sensational performers, each with his novel stunt or offering. Men of sap and savor have gone out.

Dy. Individuality is not a problem area in America. It is approximately of the kind and of the degree that our situation warrants.

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American Ethics and Public Policy

ABRAHAM KAPLAN

TO LINK morals with politics might be thought to be yoking together an ox and an ass – morality is one thing, political action another. Not so. Morality covers the area of prizing of the human personality, in the self and in others, and its province is as wide as all action bearing on man's worth – which is to say, as wide as all man does. Political morality is not a matter only of bribery and corruption, fraud and venality, or their absence. It is not a private possession making from time to time a public appearance when the private citizen holds public office. It is intrinsic to all policy whose decisions significantly affect the value placed on things human. Public morality is the morality of public policy.

In what follows, I try to sketch an experimental basis for this morality. While insisting on the historical importance for American democracy of religious doctrines and the metaphysics of "natural rights," I reject the widespread assumptions that without such transcendent faiths the belief in democracy is untenable, and that the future of democracy therefore rests on a "spiritual" revival. On the contrary, I am persuaded that the divorce of the spirit from the matter of daily experience itself endangers moral values. It is in this dualism of transcendent ideals and earthly experiences that I localize the degradation of our political life. What is needed, as I see it, is not more idealism, but more realistic ideals; not exhortations to an abstract virtue, but support of concrete measures for the betterment of specific situations.

In this perspective, I also criticize moral absolutism – that pretense that the right and good are unequivocal and certain, and that they are realizable in every case by unswerving adherence to high principle. Yet, the rejection of absolutism still allows, as I hope, a place for principled action, and even for moral heroism. Only, I have urged that it is not principles themselves on which morality requires a firm stand, but rather the concrete values to which moral principles are instrumental. Our democracy, I am convinced, has assumed too defensive a posture. Because we are determined not to take the offensive in a military sense, we tend to withdraw from

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the ideological offensive as well.[1] We underplay the positive content of democratic values; national defense becomes the substance of national ideals. The Oxford don who was asked during the First World War what he was contributing to the war effort replied, "Sir, I represent the civilization you are fighting to preserve." Events may have proved him mistaken, but only in his identification of the ends sought, not in his insistence that for a democracy military superiority cannot be an end in itself. I want to redirect attention from the Communist threat to the democratic values that are threatened.

1. Metaphysical Foundations of American Values

An interconnection of morals and politics has characterized ethical theory from the outset: whether because, as in Plato, the state is the individual writ large; or because, as with Aquinas, it has a moral aim; whether it is the source of morality, as for Hobbes; guided by a moral principle, as in the utilitarians' conception; or serves as the instrumentality for morals, as the pragmatists have it. In one way or another, theorists have persistently linked public and private morality.

Even more, they have urged that some ethical theory or other lies at the basis of political practice. They have looked into politics and, being philosophers, have found therein – a philosophy. On the political arena, they have traced the outlines of their own shadows. So today there is much pretentious talk to the effect that the issues we face are at bottom metaphysical issues, that our political uncertainties reflect epistemological confusion, that world peace is attainable only through a world philosophy. In this respect, at any rate, American hard-headedness and practicality is largely a myth. There is widespread veneration for abstract "principles," philosophical foundations, some bedrock on which social policy can be firmly grounded. In a culture where values are not experienced as "given," there is a felt need for philosophical justifications. Armed with a philosophy, a man can feel doubly secure: the incantation has its own efficacy, and, should it fail, the pundits will provide him with more powerful wizardry. It is comforting to know that such assistance is available for the asking; being a sage is also a specialty at the service of the public.

But the claims that each philosophy makes for itself are significantly weakened by the counterclaims made by conflicting philos-

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ophies. For Walter Lippmann, liberal democracy is "unworkable" save by adherence to the philosophy of natural law in which it was conceived and founded. But Croce, being an idealist, finds that it is idealism "which is one with the liberal concept of life," and to be contrasted with "naturalism, positivism, and scientific principles, all associated with the authoritarian concepts or leading to them." On the other hand, Dewey is convinced of "the undoubted historic fact that the whole modern liberal social and political movement has allied itself with philosophic empiricism." Maritain is certain that only Catholic Christianity can justify a belief in the democratic charter; and a recent European analyst of the psychology of democracy and dictatorship finds in some type of neo-Kantianism "one of the most adequate expressions, at the philosophical level, of the cultural climate of democracy."[2] Can it be that only some happy few stand firm in their democratic convictions, while the rest have built on sand?

That there is *some* connection between underlying philosophies and political practice need not be doubted – philosophies *do* matter. The question now is whether the connection is a logical one. Can we speak here of "basic premises"? Is the truth of the philosophy a necessary or even sufficient condition for the truth or rightness of the politics which appeals to it? No. The so-called "premises" serve instead as idols of the theater, or in the current idiom, as defense mechanisms, deflecting responsibility from the citizen to a system, rationalizing personal choice as the logical outcome of shared principles. Concrete policy can be deduced from abstract philosophy only if the latter is rich in normative ambiguity, so that it can be taken in one reading as a truth of man and nature, and in another, as formulating a norm of good and evil. With such equivocation in the premises, questions of policy can be gracefully begged.

Charles Stevenson has described the technique of "persuasive definition" so often applied to this end.[3] If Hegelian principles define "freedom" as obedience to the State, lovers of freedom can be given reasons for such obedience; and what is distressing, such reasons may be most effective. What *leads* to belief, and thereby action, is a very different thing from what *entails* belief. The range of policies to which a principle may lead and which it is believed to justify is limited in practice only by the skills of the *ideologue* and the predispositions of his audience. Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor was able to "prove" that he was acting entirely

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on the principles of his Prisoner; if we remain unconvinced it is not because we reject the premises or because we detect a *non sequitur*, but because we are no longer medievals.

If abstract principles are not logically sufficient for concrete policy, neither are they politically necessary. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights was subscribed to by representatives of Vedanta and positivism, Buddhism and pragmatism, Christianity and neo-Confucianism. Was only one, at most, consistent? In his introduction to the UNESCO volume on human rights, Maritain writes: "If both believed in the democratic charter, a Christian and a rationalist would still give mutually incompatible justifications for their belief. . . . And God forbid that I should say that it does not matter to know which of the two is right! It matters essentially. The fact remains that, on the practical expression of this charter, they are in agreement and can formulate together common principles of action."[4] It is this fact which is of the first importance: that there can be agreement on policy without agreement on what is called "the underlying philosophy." But if such agreement extends throughout the entire range of policy affected by the philosophies, if the two are at one in all their "practical expressions," I find it hard to see why the difference makes any difference at all, to say nothing of an "essential" one.

As a matter of political and psychological fact, it is absurd to argue that values cannot be preserved if their "metaphysical basis" is repudiated. And as a matter of logic, the argument is trivial, for the "basis" can be nothing other than a statement of the values themselves transposed into a metaphysical key. Confusion here, as Sidney Hook has often pointed out, incurs the penalty of putting ideological obstacles in the way of agreement on the plane of action. And in some quarters, it may provide a rationale for thought control on behalf of that ultimate absurdity: an "official" philosophy of democracy.

Has philosophy, then, come to this, that those who profess it do so only to proclaim its futility? Not at all! For it is futile only as a body of ultimate truths from which values are to be deduced; indispensable as a loosely knit texture of perspectives within which action finds meaning, both as significance and as worth. What matters is the philosophy lived by, commitment as well as conceptualization. And that philosophy – what makes for each man his experience intelligible and his life worthwhile – is not an abstract

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doctrine but a part of all that he has met. It is a product of the whole of culture and character – all the institutions which shape his actions, all the habits which canalize them, all the impulses which give them substance – in science, religion, art, industry, and of course, in politics as well. The search for a philosophy of politics is a search, not just for ultimate premises, but for conclusions too, and perhaps most of all, for those inferential links by which each man can fasten together all he knows and loves and bind it to the fabric of his life among other men. Such a search no man can carry out for another, and what is found answers only to his own seeking. In America, three main paths have been followed: through a social religion, through moral intuition, and through empirical science. I shall consider them in turn.

It is not to be forgotten that the liberty in which this nation was conceived was in important measure a religious liberty. To be sure, the Thanksgiving ritual is not altogether a paradigm of Colonial history; but the airy fancies of the folk myth are no more fanciful than the stony mythology of economic determinism. Economic, political, social forces – what you will; but the religious impulse too played its part, and it was more than an off-stage voice. The liberty sought, it is true, was often for a single sect, and that one's own; the victim of Old World intolerance sometimes, alas, avenged himself in the New. Yet toleration spread, and though sectarian faith, as the orthodox had feared, was thereby weakened, in the aggregate it waxed great. The number of denominations in America today is to be counted, not in the dozens, but in the hundreds.

Church membership, however, may owe more to the fact that we are a nation of joiners than to our being a fellowship of the devout. Yet, on the American political scene religion is prominent far beyond any measure of churched and unchurched citizens. Particularly is this true of political symbolism, Merriam's "miranda" of politics.[5] Within the last decade, our oath of allegiance proclaimed us to be one nation "under God"; our coinage has long reposed its trust in the treasures laid up in Heaven as well as in the Federal Reserve; our Congress enters upon its deliberations only after assurance that its proceedings will be viewed with interest from heights even above the press galleries. And a recent distinguished statesman is perhaps less likely to be remembered for his legislative wisdom than because, known to have had presidential

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aspirations, he died speaking the words "I had rather be a servant in the house of the Lord than sit in the seats of the mighty."

To suppose that in politics all this is no more than rhetoric is to forget that in government by discussion politics *is* a manner of speaking. If a candidate for office cannot risk publicly dissociating himself from religion, something of political importance is involved. Even if candidate and electorate alike are pretending to a concern neither feels, a genuine force is at work to maintain the pretense. How great this force is has been attested to innumerably: Bryce and Myrdal, separated by more than half a century, are able to agree in the flat assessment that religion is probably more influential in America than in any other country.[6]

And its influence is not a matter of symbols only, however important these may be, but a matter of practices as well. American religion is not mystic and monastic, but follows the social gospel. It may recoil from humanism in its faith, but its works are frankly humanitarian. Unlike what has happened in many theocentric or transcendental religions of Europe and Asia, here moral values have become at least as significant for the church as distinctively spiritual ones. Perhaps this marks the substitution of a moral faith for a religious one. At any rate, the consequence is that for many Americans religion is indeed something to live by. In the last century, three of the major churches split on the issue of slavery; today, integration marks another area of religious relevance.[7] Yet, it is not merely an easy cynicism which notes the disparity between creed and performance.

Not just action, but the perspectives in which action acquires significance – what I called the working philosophies – bear in America the unmistakable marks of religious patterns. Bryce goes so far as to say that "the prevalence of evangelical Protestantism has been quite as important a factor in the intellectual life of the nation as its form of government."[8] Certainly the dominant American philosophies, idealism and pragmatism, are both indeed evangels – bearers of glad tidings – holding out the promise of salvation by resolute loyalty to ideal purposes. The story is that when Emerson Hall was built at Harvard to house the philosophy department, James proposed for it the inscription "Man is the measure of all things"; but he was overruled by his colleague Royce, who countered with "What is man that Thou art mindful of him?" Both agreed, however, in seeing man as the locus of vast potential-

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ities, and the world as limitless in its possibilities for good. These are the perspectives of American religion, and of American politics as well.

In such perspectives, political values are put on a spiritual basis, political morality is objectified as a product of divine will. Liberty is God-given, equality is the levelling of man in the eyes of God, fraternity is God's injunction to love our neighbor. "Can the liberties of a nation be thought to be secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that their liberties are the gift of God?" – this question was asked, not by a minister of the church, but by Thomas Jefferson. Statesmen join with the ministry in deriving social legislation from the words of Job: "If I did despise the cause of my man-servant, or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me – what then shall I do when God rises up? . . . Did not He that made me make him? And did not one God fashion us both?"[9] The brotherhood of man is annually deduced in every pulpit from the common fatherhood of God.

Such deductions signify more than homiletic embellishment. The classic postulates of democratic theory affirm the existence of an objective difference between good and evil, and the capacity of every citizen to distinguish them and to choose freely between them. The religious philosophies account for the difference by reference to a divine order, and for the capacity to distinguish and choose by reference to conscience and free will. The dependence of democracy on religion in America is not, as is sometimes argued, that democracy lives only by the faith in it of its citizens, and faith is all of a piece. Such talk, equivocating on "faith," establishes connections of fact only by obscuring distinctions of meaning. Only verbal trickery can identify the weakening of a faith in God with a loss of that faith in man that democracy calls for. The point is that religion in America – or the dominant Protestantism at any rate – insists that man is in no need of humanly authoritative guidance and help to find the truth and thereby to attain the good. It is this insistence that constitutes the democratic faith: that men are not so depraved, so ignorant, or so helpless as not to be trusted with the making of their own lives. The reliance that each individual may put in his own conscience in matters of religion is easily generalized to a political individualism. The inviolability of each man's firmness in the right as God gives him

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to see the right finds its counterpart in the dignity of the free citizen as the source and not just the subject of state authority.

Thus a religious man, committed to democratic values, can interpret them in religious terms, and in America has usually done so. But religious beliefs alone cannot compel him to such values. That men are equal in the eyes of God does not of itself entail that they must be so in the eyes of the state: earthly inequalities may be among those things which the faithful must render unto Caesar. The Church which prizes the dignity of each man's soul may call upon the secular arm to destroy his body for the sake of his soul. In human history deprivation of life and liberty, to say nothing of interference with the pursuit of happiness, has been justified rather more often by appeal to divine law than by reference solely to a civil order.[10] The relation between political morality and religious faith is not that either can be deduced from the other, but that, in man's urge toward coherent and comprehensive perspectives of action, both political aspirations and religious ideals are shaped and strengthened by the realms of value disclosed in the other.

I do not see, therefore, that democratic conclusions can be denied, as a matter of either logic or psychology, to those who reject the religious premises from which some persons mistakenly suppose such conclusions to be derived. It is said that Bertrand Russell, in a public lecture at Cooper Union, was once asked, "Lord Russell, how do you account for the fact that, though all men were created equal, there is so much injustice in the world?" To which he promptly replied, "Well, you see, I don't believe that men were created at all!" The religious premise carries with it only a religious conclusion, not a political one; and a morality is entailed by it only when the morality has been presupposed.

But such a presupposition can as easily be secular as sacred. If we must first believe men to be created equal in order to justify the ideal of political equality, can we not just as well believe to start with that men are equal in their own nature, and thus base our political ethics on a natural rather than a supernatural order? In American thought, this alternative has been an even more influential conception of the ground of value, for both man and the state, than the purely religious one. Explicitly formulated, it constitutes the theory of natural rights and natural law.

Some such theory has played a part in many of the world's

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great religious philosophies. By it, religion is naturalized, and the supernatural projected onto the face of nature as a principle of cosmic order. The Law of Heaven reaches down into life on earth as the injunction to maintain this order. The *tao* of Chinese philosophy, *dharma* in Indian thought, the *torah* of the Hebrews, and *ananke* of the Greeks are, from this point of view, variations on a single theme. In all, moral obligation and natural necessity are fused into a conception of a system of nature which accommodates both facts and values. Fundamentally, the principle of value lies in the orderliness of the facts: when all is in place, the outcome is a cosmic equilibrium reflected in man's mind as the idea of Justice. Wrong-doing is an upsetting of the balance, a departure from the Path on which alone righteousness lies.

Such a system of nature may find its political counterpart in a fixed social order, a hierarchy of positions each carrying a determinate set of rights and duties. Crime and sin coincide as *hubris*, not knowing one's place. Natural law here becomes the ideology of conservatism and absolutism, as in Aquinas and Hobbes. The violation of the natural order, so conceived, was the basis of Greek tragedy. But as the fixities of the social order are dissolved, such violations may become the matter of comedy. The tragic victim of fate in Sophocles gives way in Shaw to the comic hero who disregards social roles.

The system of nature may be thought to be reflected, not in society as such, but in the microcosm of the individual mind. In this perspective, shared rationality binds men together in universal brotherhood, while endowing each individual with inviolable rights grounded in his own rational nature. Such a philosophy lends itself to a liberal society where obligations are freely contracted by each individual, not deduced from a preassigned status. This is the conception of natural law running through the Stoics, Spinoza, Locke, and thence to the founders of the American republic.

The objective difference between good and evil called for by the religionist is here provided in a more economical metaphysics by the natural order. Governments exist to secure the rights which by nature belong to the governed; political morality consists in the scrupulous acknowledgment of these rights. The Declaration of Independence demands for the American people only "the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them." In the same vein, though not so explicitly, the preamble

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of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations affirms that "recognition of the inherent [*sic*] dignity and of the equal and inalienable [*sic*] rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world." And Article One lays it down that "all human beings are born [*sic*] free and equal in dignity and rights." Natural law, though not a premise for the deduction of political rights, is in America and throughout the contemporary world an acknowledged platform of political aspiration to such rights.[11]

The theory of natural rights, in its modern setting, can be understood as an extension of the religious right of emancipation from institutional authority. "Every man his own priest" leads easily to the principle of "every man a king." The primacy of the individual conscience, read out into nature as an objectified system of norms, accounts for the distinctive traits of the law of nature. Natural law is self-evident as a deliverance of moral intuition, irrevocable as sharing in the binding force of a self-imposed moral obligation, universal as the moral standard which is applied to the self only as holding for all men everywhere. Natural law is not the ground of political morality but its projective expression.

The "nature" of the theory is not the nature disclosed to empirical inquiry, but what is identified as "natural" in the sense of conforming to a norm externally imposed. Is it "natural" for a mother to deprive her children, or a ruler his loyal subjects, of their lives and liberties? Such things *have* been done. Nature as the totality of observed and observable fact includes the violation of every "natural right" and "natural law" that political theorists have laid down. The "nature" of the theory is only what answers to the norms of the theorizer; it is these norms, not nature herself, from which the political rights are derived. "A great multitude of people are continually talking of the Law of Nature," Bentham observes, "and then they go on giving you their sentiments about what is right and wrong; and these sentiments, you are to understand, are so many chapters and sections of the Law of Nature."[12] We who condemn despotism and injustice must ourselves assume the responsibility for the code of political morality by which we judge them to be damnable.

The whole apparatus of natural law adds nothing to the moral content of our politics, but only changes its form of expression.

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Beginning with whatever code of political rights and duties our needs and knowledge, traditions and experience have produced, we covertly construct from it a system of natural law, present this as objective in origin and universal in application, then triumphantly derive from it the rights and duties with which we started. The futility of such logic was clearly seen by Hume: ". . . How fruitless it is to . . . seek in the laws of nature a stronger foundation for our political duties than interest and human conventions, while these laws (the laws of nature) themselves are built on the very same foundation." We walk this circle only because, if it be sufficiently great, we can return convinced that we stand at the still point of the turning world. Rights to be defended as *our* ideals and secured through *our* efforts can then be seen as antecedently guaranteed, absolute and fixed in the nature of things. Such a conviction may indeed produce a show of courage: with a stacked deck, a man will stake everything. But when we are challenged by competing absolutes, the courage called for must have deeper roots, or it will vanish.

Of itself, then, natural law has no definite content; the morality it proclaims is the product of moral intuition, not of metaphysical deduction. Now the fact is that intuitions differ. However much we may insist that what is intuited is a law outside the self, as fixed in its own character as are the principles of science and mathematics discerned by sense and reason, the question still remains which of several conflicting moralities has properly intuited its object. And this question intuition alone cannot answer, but can only beg. If conscience speaks to each man the word of the one God, what a pity she speaks in so many different tongues! Indeed, when it comes to conscience, a man may fail to understand even his native accents. The oracle must perforce speak in riddles when the god within is, himself, of two minds.

Moreover, the law of nature claims to rest on what is innate in man, not on what is imposed or withheld by merely human institutions. But habit becomes second nature, and natural law must inevitably change as men become habituated to changed institutions. Moral sensibility is notoriously capable of being blunted: vice, we have been warned, may be first endured, then pitied, then embraced. An all-powerful state need not fear the moral intuitions of its citizenry; it can shape these intuitions to its own ends, as a succession of modern novelists have pictured with fearful realism. It is easy to

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see how natural law may be made matter for indoctrination; not so easy to conceive of a process of education of the faculty on which its recognition depends, without presupposing the infallibility of the educator.

In sum, we need not wonder that in American history natural rights and natural law have been argued on behalf of the most diverse policies: by Federalists and anti-Federalists, slaveholders and abolitionists, reformers and reactionaries. For the "nature" appealed to was not given in experience, but imposed on experience to accord with pre-determined values. ". . . The views held regarding human nature," John Dewey has observed, "were those appropriate to the purposes and policies a given group wanted to carry through. . . . What passed as psychology was a branch of political doctrine."[13] And the same is true of what passed as the metaphysics of political morality.

2. Empirical Foundations of American Values

An empirical theory of value must hold that ends as well as means are empirically judged. This is the position expounded in American life most influentially by John Dewey.[14] Every valuation is grounded in an evaluation; we are justified in prizing only what emerges as worthy from an empirical appraisal. The injunctions of morality cannot be divided, as Kant assumed, into hypothetical imperatives and categorical imperatives. At bottom they are all hypothetical, and only experience can warrant the presumed connection between hypothetical antecedent and enjoined consequent.

On this view, moral imperatives can be intelligently arrived at and maintained only after full exposure – directly, or mediated by transmitted knowledge – to facts concerning the conditions and consequences of the values involved. To be sure, such imperatives, serving as norms of action, are not propositional in form, and so cannot be certified as true, whether on an experimental basis or on any other. But American philosophy today avails itself of a technique known as the *method of coordination.* To each imperative there is coordinated a set of declarative propositions, and it is the truth of these propositions that provides the basis for the imperative. It cannot be denied that on the contemporary philosophic scene so-called "cognitivists" and "emotivists" differ from one another on the question whether the coordination exhausts the content of the norm. Does the imperative also have a non-cognitive "emotive

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meaning," or does its cognitive content leave a residue only of a normative *use?* But more and more it is coming to be felt that the significance of this difference has been exaggerated by academic debate, a fruitless polemic in the name of labels and schools. There is widespread agreement that, whether in the last analysis or only penultimately, facts are of overriding relevance to values.

What truth attaches to a moral norm? By what coordination can it be given cognitive meaning? There is, first, its *reflexive* sense, that those who enjoin the imperative are themselves committed to the values it holds out. The values of a propagandist are false because they are insincere, insincere not as a matter of individual psychology but of political commitment. A master morality is false because it serves only to create a population of docile slaves: *thou* shalt, but not *I* will. And whether a morality is reflexively true is a question of fact, though the fact be hard to come by when minds are corrupted and the incorruptible are silenced.

There is, second, the *derived* cognitive meaning of implicit hypotheticals – that adequacy of means to ends which justifies the normative use of the categorical. We make one choice rather than another because of the consequences experience has led us to expect – consequences on character and personality, to be sure, as well as on the material world, but consequences rooted in experience nevertheless. The necessity of the moral law is at bottom the ineluctability of fact. We must, because, the world being what it is, we have no choice. Nature, to be commanded, must be obeyed, and obedience to the moral law is the condition of power over such values as life affords.

And there is, third, the *extended* cognitive meaning of a moral imperative which consists in the fittingness to its object of the attitude and emotion expressed by it. To value something is to take up a certain attitude towards it, but attitudes are not compartmentalized from beliefs. Our emotions are not withdrawn into themselves but reach out into the world, and are rational only as the world goes out to meet them in turn. Joy and sorrow, love and fear, all the substance of our moral life, may be groundless in particular circumstances, as ignorance, error, prejudice and confusion seal us off from the world as it truly is. Whether they are well grounded in given circumstances is again a question of fact.

In short, an empirical theory of value judges by the fruit, not the seed. From Locke through Hume and Russell, British empiri-

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cism has validated knowledge by reference to its mode of origination; the pragmatic epistemology of American thought looks instead to the consequences of the idea, just as in American life (or in its ideology, at any rate) a man is judged by the fulfillment in his future, not by the promise in his antecedents. Not their source in God or Nature but their destination in man certifies human values.

This is to say that there are no value properties as such. There are no simple traits whose possession or lack is the mark of good and evil. A thing becomes of value by virtue of its status and function in ongoing behavior. Values are thought to be transcendental because every empirical property is just what it is, a brute fact, and its value is then imagined to extend into another dimension outside experience, religious or metaphysical. But its capacity to satisfy human desires, its delicacy in answering to human emotion, its readiness to respond to human volition – all this is also matter of fact, and can be uncovered in experience.

Not that morality consists simply in the immediate satisfaction of desire! Such satisfactions are a necessary condition of value, but are not themselves sufficient. No act could be right which added only pain and suffering to the world, and which could not reasonably have been expected to do anything else. This morality belongs to the Devil. But an immediate experience of satisfaction cannot itself certify to morality, for life extends beyond the fleeting moment, and in the pursuit of any one value we must perforce put all our values at stake. Only long-range and comprehensive satisfactions suffice for moral judgment.

Science, too, must distinguish between reality and the momentary appearance to sense; yet it must relate all its truths to the world as sensed, while recognizing that what always and everywhere appears in a particular way really *is* as it appears to be. The proper contrast is not between Appearance and Reality, Satisfaction and the Good, but between a momentary appearance or a fleeting and passing satisfaction, and the enduring and comprehensive ones. In its own status every appearance is real, just as every felt good is, insofar as sensed, genuinely good; the fool's paradise is just as heavenly – while it lasts. Our troubles come only when we move, as move we must, from what is here and now to what lies elsewhere. It is in this movement that we may find ourselves misguided; and only experience can be our guide.

Here, then, is a truly naturalistic ethics, one which bases values

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in the nature that flows through the channels of human sensibility. It is because of what *we* are, not what man is, that we are mindful of him; it is enough for human action that it attain a human good. Naturalism is the position that there is no other good; as C. I. Lewis put it, man's own experience is ultimately the only touchstone we have for what is good.[15] And it will serve.

On this theory, it is easy to see the importance for policy of a thoroughgoing knowledge of man's ways and works. But it is not the only theory which gives knowledge this place: the *philosophes* of the Enlightenment, the English utilitarians and French positivists, the "scientific" socialists of several varieties – all agreed in relying on experience to choose public policy. Given this agreement, differences in theory become secondary. There is a naturalistic core in every ethics which relies on experience for the recognition of what is good, even if it is not experience that *makes* it good. Even a religious ethic, if it is no longer involved with heavenly reward and punishment, must turn to naturalistic sanctions for its morality: the direct *experience* of good and bad consequences, in this earthly life. We are all "empiricists" today, just as we are all "liberals"! But when there are differences on the level of moral practice, not just of ethical theory, the case is altered. Sooner or later the problem of relativism must be faced. Does naturalism bring us at last to the admission that the Russians are right, after all, in dismissing human rights as bourgeois values, and the knowledge on which their espousal rests as class science?

It is the centrality of man in modern political theory which has raised the specter of relativism. "The fundamental difference between even ancient republican and modern democratic governments," Dewey has pointed out, "has its source in the substitution of human nature for cosmic nature as the foundation of politics."[16] While cosmic nature is single and constant, human nature is multiple and varied. It is one world, to be sure, but it is inhabited by many men, and they are not all alike. Class and culture do affect values, and within these large differences are the countless variations of lesser groupings and individual idiosyncracies. When values become humanized, the way is opened for each man to play God, and the first act of infantile omnipotence is not to create but to destroy. Hence the moral nihilism of sophomoric rebellion, or the nihilism of the larger political rebellion expressed in that "critique of ideology" which dismisses as "propaganda" all political ideals – save the rebel's own.

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But in the end these, too, must give way. If *I* must do God's work, it will after all remain undone. If my values are only in my think-so, they are no values at all. When a man mistakes himself for God he denies what is godly within him: the capacity to know and love the good in God's world – the world as it really is – and not just in the madhouse of his own mind. The sin is not in eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but in taking so little, and that from another's hand. It is the little learning, and that little at one remove from our own direct experience of value, which is the dangerous thing.

The simple fact of moral experience is that *what* we judge is distinct from the fact of our judging it. Our judging, like all else we do, is conditioned by all that makes us what we are; but whether we have judged well or ill is not determined by those conditions. Science as a process of inquiry is as conditioned by society as are all other social practices and institutions, but this affects only what we believe, not what is true. We ask the questions in the language of our culture and prompted by our individual desires to know; but the answers are nature's. What is good for one man may not be so for another, indeed; this fact, however, is indifferent to what either man may think to be good, whether for himself *or* for the other. The principle of one man's meat holds true, but it does not undermine the objectivity of a dietetics grounded in physiology and a knowledge of the individual case. In short, relativism does not condemn us to subjectivity but frees us from it, for only when we have relativized the value judgment to the needs and circumstances of the human beings whose values are in question can the judgment become truly objective. We live each of us, not as we wish, but as we must, in the circumstances in which we find ourselves. Morality may impose upon us the duty to change these circumstances; it cannot become, nor would we have it become, any the less circumstantial.

This *objective relativism* contrasts markedly with the cultural relativism of a few decades ago. The comparative ethnology of the last century, in disclosing the astonishing variety in patterns of culture, was taken by many as providing a scientific warrant for moral subjectivism. Of course, it does no such thing; we cannot rationalize our failure to assume responsibility for *our* values by pointing out that they are not shared by the Kwakiutl. As a matter of fact, there is a wider commonality of values than was

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at first supposed: all cultures impose taboos on murder and incest, for example, regulating in some fashion libidinal and aggressive impulses. More to the point is the recognition that each culture inhabits, in a very real sense, a world of its own – different in fact, and even more markedly different in what is taken to be fact. What is sound political morality in Massachusetts may not be so in Madagascar – and why should it! And if it were, ignorance and error, in the one locale as in the other, would produce a show of disagreement without an underlying difference.

Conversely, there may be differences in value without disagreement, differences in taste which can be allowed for without invoking a margin for error. The Victorian ladies watching a tempestuous performance of *Antony and Cleopatra* were overheard to remark, "How different, how very different, from the home life of our own dear Queen!" We need not fear that the awareness of other patterns forces upon us at once the burden of defending our own. Not every disagreement rests on a real difference, and not every difference involves a real conflict. As the world really becomes one, in fact and in the perspectives on it of the world's peoples, values also may be expected to be increasingly shared. And where they diverge, a larger value may lie in the divergence itself.

3. The Dualistic Code

Regardless of whether America bases its values on religion, on a metaphysics of natural rights, or on an empirical naturalism, what *are* its values?

At the very outset, we must face the stale charge of American "materialism," which over and over again has been pictured as excluding that life of the spirit in which religious, moral, esthetic and intellectual values have their being. For some curious reason, classical imagery is usually invoked here: America is a new Carthage, sunk in barbaric sensuality; at the same time, it is a coarse and unfeeling Sparta, confronting the Athenian temper of a mellow European culture; or else it is another Rome, substituting engineering and military prowess for the glorious heritage of Greek civilization.

Whatever the metaphor, it is literalized in the platitudes describing America as an acquisitive society, in which success is pursued at any price, worth measured by the dollar, and wealth made the basis

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of invidious distinction by expenditure for conspicuous consumption and waste. The indictment continues by charging that in America goods are thought to define the Good, all values are reduced to sales-value, and even good will has a price put upon it. America is materialistic because above all else it prizes material objects; and though its cars, refrigerators, and bathtubs are all that one could wish, Americans are incapable of genuine and deep satisfaction with them or with anything else. In short, in the course of the last half-century Europe's image of America as Liberty Lighting the World has given way to the Hollywood stereotype of the poor little rich girl, who owns everything and can enjoy nothing.

What is dangerous about this image is not merely the effect it has on the attitudes of other nations to us; it is even more dangerous because of the effect it has on our own self-image. Americans are pathetically prone to act out such fantasies even when they are not at all of their own making. Nature imitates art – executives posture like men of distinction, lovers counterfeit the movie manner, statesmen groom themselves for television appearances and the covers of national weeklies. The danger in the myth of American materialism is that we will accept with enthusiasm – and naïveté –the role in which it casts us of the world's plumbers and policemen.

Properly understood, no myth is wholly mythical. The wildest dream fulfills some real wish, and plausibility demands a core of fact for every fantasy. We can recognize something of ourselves in the image Europeans project of us, which is no less ours because we can also see it so readily, if we choose, in those who are projecting it. In matters of religion, we must admit that the American Christmas is as much the concern of the Chamber of Commerce as of the church. As for morality, to the commandment "Honor thy father and mother" we have added the codicil "Say it with Flowers." The career of the fabulous Duveen makes it difficult to deny that art in America is a commodity, valued less for the esthetic experience it provides than for the prestige its ownership or even viewing confers. The works of the mind, if they are not laid to rest in a professional journal or a university press, must meet the exigencies of mass sales and the standards of book-club juries of selection. And nothing is more materialistic than the obscenities of the spirit with which in Southern California it is the custom to bury the dead.

Yet, this core of truth in the falsehood of the caricature is not

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distinctively American. It is a by-product of civilizing agencies at work throughout the world. The deadening of the spirit and the corruption of the moral life with which America is charged is not an American invention; it is a concomitant, as Ortega y Gasset has persuasively argued, of mass man everywhere.[17] It is easy to present oneself as a member of the elite by sneering at mediocrity; none more loyal than those who denounce traitors! But the American middle class is no worse, though no better, than the middle class anywhere else. It is true that the push button and assembly line are destroying that sense of effort and sensitivity to materials essential to the creation and appreciation of works of art. But it is sheer prejudice that dismisses as untutored Yankee ingenuity the American contribution to the world's technology, while the contribution of other nations is supposed to attest to the high scientific level of their cultures.

The defense that American "materialism" is largely a product of the conditions of life in the twentieth century is by no means an endorsement of the clichés which condemn twentieth-century civilization wholesale as a soulless technology. Without this technology, the soul might not have a body with which to live the life of the spirit. Lecky is a thousand times right when he declares that probably "the American inventor of the first anaesthetic has done more for the real happiness of mankind than all the moral philosophers from Socrates to Mill."[18] Care for the body, in America at any rate, has not been in the service of that hedonist sensuality which is so loathsome to the ministers of the spirit; the American ideal may be comfort, but it is certainly not pleasure — save perhaps in those backwashes of the South where the self-image of decadent aristocracy is perpetuated. Technology has meant, for the most part, more food, clothing, and shelter — and must mean still more. European moralists must not be allowed to forget the wisdom of their own Aristotle: before a man can live well, he must be able to live.

Moreover, material achievement has made possible the widest access in history to the products of culture, and the widest sharing in its production and appreciation — in music, theater, letters, and the other arts. Behind the recurrent charge of Philistinism is perhaps no more than the fact, of which America can be proud, that we have no recognized leisure class of esthetes and connoisseurs to serve as established arbiters of taste. And American standardiza-

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tion, after all, serves for society as a habit does for the individual: it may confine energies to a stifling routine, but it may also release them for creative effort.

America's material achievement needs no apology. What *is* indefensible is our failure to integrate the perspectives of this achievement with those in which our other values are defined and pursued. An age of material vigor is not necessarily backward in culture: it is usual to refer here to Pericles, Augustus and the first Elizabeth. But what we have done is to dissociate values from their material embodiments, so that worth has become unreal, and much of our material reality worthless. This dissociation I call *cultural dualism*, and the value judgments it engenders the *dualistic code*.

To be sure, not every duality marks a dualism: there *is* after all a difference between an ideal end and the means realistically available for its attainment. But for the dualist this difference is thought to be absolute and irreconcilable, the distinction is drawn only to set the one against the other in far-reaching conflict, and, in short, the two are conceived as belonging to disparate metaphysical categories. The dualisms of spirit and matter, ideals and expediency, art and science, thought and action can be traced from Plato and Pauline Christianity through Descartes into modern times; in America today they are of enormous importance.

To the degree that ours is in very truth an acquisitive society, it is because of the separation we enforce between creation and ownership, between the instrumentality for the good life of what is acquired and the status mistaken for that life the mere acquisition confers. Work is unceasingly contrasted with leisure and few occupations pursued as a calling, so that occupational choices present the continuing dilemma – genuine only in the dualistic perspective – between prostituting a talent and burying it. One man is idealistic, another practical: either/or. Art is often treated, in Dewey's apt phrasing, as "the beauty parlor of civilization," moving out from the museums only to serve as irrelevant decoration. In short, beauty versus utility, thought versus action, theory versus practice – a Noah's ark of antediluvian pairings!

The situation with intellectual values is representative, and of particular importance in its own right for a political morality consisting in the best application of intelligence to the resources of political experience. The charge that America's worship of Matter has cast Mind into outer darkness is absurd. The United

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States today is undeniably a world center of scientific research and free scholarship. True, much of its creative effort is European in origin; but so is America itself. This great intellectual activity is now an integral part of the American scene. Our libraries, laboratories, and institutions of higher learning, taken all in all, rank with the best anywhere. European education is perhaps more intensive at an earlier age; but in my experience the difference disappears later on. And that so much education is here made available to so many is an intellectual as well as social gain which is not to be dismissed with cynical clichés about quantity and quality.

There is more basis to the criticism that intellectual effort in America is largely utilitarian in spirit, and that the mind is cultivated, not for its own sake, but in the service of government, industry, or individual ambition. The true and the beautiful are swallowed up in a utilitarian good. In many quarters, philosophy and the humanities have taken up a defensive posture, seeking justification by claiming a contribution to science as "methodology" or to society as a way of filling the vacuum of increasing leisure. Yet the ideal of a "humanistic" education, when this is contrasted with a "technological" one, has been – as Dewey has tirelessly argued – not genuinely liberating, but a perpetuation of the standards of a leisure class, standards which are truly "materialistic" because they are derived from the status of those sufficiently wealthy to be spared the necessity of doing anything useful.

What remains true is that in America there is a continuing strain of anti-intellectualism, a persistent dislike and distrust of ideas and the men who live for them, possibly no stronger than in the past, but politically more influential. It is hard to believe today that so shrewd an observer as Bryce was at one time able to report that in America "intellectual eminence . . . is more admired and respected than in Europe."[19] In the last quarter-century, since the early days of the New Deal and its "brain trust," intellectual eminence, whatever admiration it has commanded, has occupied a steadily declining place in government. The makers of policy are increasingly recruited from business, finance, and industry, less and less from science, art, or education; the occasional exceptions are markedly more infrequent than their counterparts in Europe. There are in government, of course, considerable numbers of "symbol specialists" (as they are called by contemporary analysts of "elite structures") – which is to say: lawyers, publicists, and

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the like. The question, however, is not one of facility with words but with the ideas for which words are instruments. From this point of view, the philosopher Sri Radhakrishnan, the Vice President of India, provides almost a symbolic contrast with our own. We may not need to import the wisdom of the East; but we need desperately the domestic article.

I do not mean to say that contemporary anti-intellectualism is something new in American life. There has always been a civil war on this front, and the strategic position of the man of ideas is no worse today than it has been on several occasions in the past. Western agrarianism with its hostility to intellection has been as much a part of American politics as the high culture of New England. The fact is that the American attitude toward intellectuals has always been ambivalent. The problem becomes acute only when the chronic inner conflict is externalized; and what is then crucial is the character of the culturally acceptable ways of resolving the conflict. What I am protesting is the tendency to seek such resolutions by a partition of sovereignty between the thinkers and doers. This is why I speak of our code as dualistic: not that we reject the life of the mind but that we insulate it from the world of action. In Santayana's words, the dualism consists in "that separation which is so characteristic of America between things intellectual, which remain wrapped in a feminine veil and, as it were, under glass, and the rough business and passions of life."[20] Things intellectual we confine either to the selection of appropriate means – the myth of scientific neutralism – or else to the purely verbal specification of abstract ends too remote to have any effect on policy. In our important choices, we largely disregard the intelligent habits, skills and attitudes so effectively cultivated within the scientific enterprise. The dangers of such separatism are not just those of an amoral intellectuality, but even more those of an unintelligent, unrealistic morality. As it has been from the beginning, we might be able to deal with the scoundrels – if only we are not first destroyed by the fools.

What is foolish is the simple-minded morality which is indifferent to mere matters of fact, the thoughtlessness of Shaw's Sergius in *Arms and the Man* who with flashing saber leads a cavalry charge against a battery of machine guns. What sublime heroism! Yes, and what disastrous stupidity! There is no question that Americans are idealists; we have Wilson's word for it that "America is the

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only idealist nation in the world."[21] But it is idealism of a peculiarly adolescent kind – unyielding, unrealistic, otherworldly – in a word, romantic. It starts out, not from where we are, but from where we *would* be if only we had the making of the world in our own hands; and it ends where it should begin. We undertake to bring to their senses whole nations, but not the necessary majority of the United States Senate. And what then! We may lose the good fight, but it will be well fought, and to the very end we will keep – our white plume. Alas for these childhood dreams of glory!

Such romantic idealism has played a considerable part in American reform movements and in American political life generally. "Sometimes people call me an idealist," Wilson says again. "Well, that is the way I know I am an American."[22] And he is right. Domestically, the idealist's image of himself has been that of a St. George attacking the dragons of Big Business, Crooked Politics, and Vested Interests. The familiar cycle of municipal reform in the United States documents in full both the ideal impulse and its realistic failure. In foreign affairs we picture ourselves as actuated only by moral considerations, while other nations go whoring after the false gods of their own self-interest. ". . . In each of the two world wars," Laski comments, "American participation has seemed to some millions of its citizens not a necessary policy of self-defense, but a genuine act of charity, in which the President and Congress were deliberately casting their vote for right against wrong."[23] More recently, our policy in the Middle East has been presented to the world as the path of international righteousness from which our friends, alas, have strayed. But we will teach them self-denial for the sake of moral ideals.

This is as far as the idealist goes in his analysis of the moral problem: moral conflict is always between duty and desire, and morality stands unequivocally on the side of duty. For the adolescent, perhaps, this analysis may have elements of realism: his maturation rests on his coming to terms with dangerously powerful impulses. But in the world of men, such formulations are hopelessly superficial and simplistic. There are conflicts among desires and among duties as well as between them. The problem is not how to carry out an easily recognizable idealistic policy, but how to reconcile conflicting ideals in a concrete context of their incompatibility, how to satisfy conflicting desires in circumstances that

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threaten to frustrate one or another of them. These are the conflicts which make a situation realistically problematic; and with regard to these, moralizing idealism is silent. It has recourse instead to a rhythm of sin and repentance, a sporadic self-righteousness which leaves us afterwards free to sin again. We alternate between a resolute response to the call of duty, till we win the war, and a return to the free indulgence of desire, till we lose the peace.

4. Vulgar Pragmatism and Moralization

The core of truth in the charge that America worships success lies in the "practical" bent of our man of affairs: not that for him only success counts, but that he looks to it for the opportunity *afterwards* to apply it to ideal ends. The revised American version is: Seek ye the kingdom of this earth; and all these godly things shall be added unto you.

It is useless to pretend that we do not largely accept success on its own terms: only the bankrupt has engaged in sharp practices, just as only the defeated candidate was guilty of dirty politics. Virtue always triumphs when triumph is the supreme virtue, and the triumphant the recognized arbiters of public morals. The history of the great American fortunes is ethically less interesting for the immoralities of their acquisition than for the moral force they were able to exert when acquired. Some recent distinguished political careers bring this documentation up to date. Yet, what is often overlooked in this condemnation is that success is rarely in American life an end in itself. It is pursued, in a pathetic dependency on social acceptance, not for pleasure or power, but for admiration, love, and even self-respect.

In all this there is nothing of the philosophical pragmatism of Peirce, James, and Dewey, but only a vulgarized caricature. Yet, there is something in pragmatism which lends itself to this vulgarization. An ethics which demands only the continuing application of intelligence to the problems of men without recourse to principles or powers outside experience does not invite spectacular acts of courage and devotion. It calls rather for that quiet heroism which so easily gives way, as was recognized long ago, to a quiet desperation. But there is nothing in pragmatism of the frame of mind for which the paradigm of the pragmatic lies in meeting a payroll or winning an election.

The issue here is not one of philosophical exegesis; what is at

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stake is not the correctness of a philosophical interpretation, but the morality of a pattern of action.

American morality has a strong legalistic cast. Public morals are thought to be satisfied by conformity to public law, though the grounding of this law in "nature" allows morality to transcend purely political arrangements. But such arrangements are widely regarded as the proper instrument to secure moral values. Confronted with injustice, indecency, or iniquity of any kind, the American reaction is likely to be: "There oughta be a law!" The mere existence of the law is thought to suffice: the commandment – Prohibition or a Peace Pact – magically brings about its own fulfillment. More accurately, it is a moralistic aspiration which is fulfilled. The enactment of the law, like a New Year's resolution, puts us on record on the side of morality, and thereby allays anxiety and guilt concerning our immoral impulses. It has been estimated that some ninety per cent of the population would be in jails if all our statutes were enforced. It is difficult even to imagine the enforcement of some of them – for instance, those regulating details of conjugal intimacies. Such statutes are empty, legally and – what is more to the point – morally. It is this hollow shell of morality that I call *moralization.*

The shell is largely verbalistic in character. In these matters, Americans put great emphasis on the word, especially the written word. American constitutionalism, for example, contrasts markedly with the British, possibly because the younger and more heterogeneous society cannot rely so well on long-established custom. Whatever the reasons, in America concrete practices turn to abstract symbolisms for their justification. Legal issues are argued and decided by "the Law" and "the Courts," not by lawyers and judges. Conformity, whether social or moral, is sustained by appeal to "Public Opinion," "Good Citizenship," "Civic Responsibility," and the like. And in politics, the label is crucial – from "the New Deal" to "Modern Republicanism." There is no question here of cynical propaganda, like the use of the term "socialism" by European fascist parties. Americans believe what they say: in its own perspectives the Liberty League of Roosevelt's day was defending liberties, not privileges. His "economic royalists" were convinced democrats, that is to say, republicans – I mean equalitarians. And on the other side, the real constraints imposed by the state to maximize the range of real choices were verbalized as

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involving no loss of liberty at all. "The thousand-dollar fur coat," Blondie explains, "was on sale for five hundred; but I saved five hundred, so it really cost me nothing!"

Philosophy, it must be confessed, has endorsed and even participated in such logic. An important part in American life is played by the grand occasions on which philosophers are called upon to make cosmic pronouncements. Few Americans would venture to deny that their politics and ethics, their whole scheme of values, rests upon what is called a "metaphysical basis." And to be really profound, it seems that such a metaphysics must be largely unintelligible. When Martin Buber accepted an appointment to the Hebrew University, he faced the task of learning to lecture in Hebrew; to a friend who some time afterwards inquired about his progress in the language he replied, "I know enough now to make myself understood, but alas, not enough to be understood!" Party platforms, preambles to constitutions, charters and declarations, solemn editorials, and the like, all play roles akin to that of the invocations of the congressional chaplain. They have no bearing on the decisions to be made; but Americans would be uneasy at their absence.

In a word, moralization is the ritualistic use of the symbols of morality. Verbalizations are abstracted from their contextual references and felt to have a life of their own. The words go their own way, and far from being instruments of moral effort, can themselves bend moral aspirations to their own ends. The basic values of our public policy are thought to be embodied in "the American dream," "the American way of life," or simply "Americanism." But to our ears "the French dream" sounds obscene, "the German way of life" rigidly inhuman, and "Britishism" connotes snobbery and priggishness. Yet the interpretation is as projective in the first case as in the others. In the concrete, "the American way" is the way of Americans and nothing else; what way we are to choose as we face particular decisions is in no way defined by appeal to the ritualistic symbol. Anthropologists have long been aware that rituals precede the dogmas which rationalize them, and also survive changes in these dogmas. But the wisdom of moral choice is independent of ritual and dogma alike.

What is at work here is the belief in verbal magic, in the power of the word itself to bring about a desired result. The magic, of course, lies in the mechanism of efficacy; there is no magic in

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achieving an open door by asking someone to open it. The magic lies in the "Open Sesame" which suffices of itself. The word imprisons the essence of the thing, which is released to do its work when the word is uttered; we are masters of the demon if we can speak his secret name. These are the fairy tales that we act out in politics when we rely on "free information" and the power of "the truth" for world-wide accord with our policies. This is the magic of securing loyalty by oaths, good citizenship by singing the national anthem at ball games, and patriotism by repainting our mail boxes in the colors of Old Glory. It is the superstition of the gentleman's agreement to a conspiracy of silence, lest the mention of discrimination give it an actuality it otherwise would not have. Nothing is fully real, we suppose, till it is verbalized. The facts of life need not be faced if we can find euphemisms by which they can be magically transformed.

The danger of these fantasies does not lie in ritualism itself. It lies in our taking the word for the deed, in ascribing to ritual an effectiveness in action which it does not have. In America, Laski points out, "there is an excessive love of the rhetoric of rights and a too easy belief that their declaration is their fulfillment."[24] Ringing pronouncements are mistaken for moral courage, the verbalization of ideals for moral achievement. It is in this perspective that Americans put so much reliance on promises as political instruments. The campaign promise is recognized in our own country for the ritual that it is, but in foreign affairs we distress other nations by habitually promising more than we intend to deliver, more even than we could deliver if we wanted to. In our own childishness we treat other nations like unruly children to be quieted with assurances of future delights.

It is in these dualistic perspectives that we supplement our moralism with a vulgar pragmatism. Having separated "practical" interests from "moral" ones, however, we find that even the fulfillment of the earthly promises fails to win us friends. Our philanthropies are suspected to conceal our self-interest, while the frank defense of our interests is condemned as immoral. In the minds of many people around the world, whatever the action, we're damned if we do and damned if we don't. In part, of course, it is Soviet diplomacy and propaganda that has maneuvered us into this position. But in part also, the extent to which they have succeeded points to the vulnerability of our own dualistic dilemma: what is

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moral is unreal, what is "realistic" is immoral.

What is genuinely pragmatic in America is our willingness to apply science to the problems of technology. Americans are widely stereotyped as having an intense and ever-present desire to improve ways of doing things, provided we see the improvement as only a change in means for established ends. But it is true that with regard to ends we are remarkably conservative. The scientific outlook of our technology continues to undermine traditional conceptions of value, but that outlook is usually regarded as incapable of replacing those conceptions by more adequate ones. The achievement of nuclear fission has not suddenly made science a threat to civilization. It has only stepped up the magnitude and urgency of a problem faced by civilization since science first became a significant force in society. Some years before the atom bomb Dewey wrote: "A culture which permits science to destroy traditional values but which distrusts its power to create new ones is a culture which is destroying itself."[25] It is not science itself but the leaden shield that insulates it from ethics and politics which is deadly. We must either leave science alone altogether and forego its transformation of means, or else integrate it with our moral aspirations and forego the fixity of traditional ends. This is the spirit in which I have been urging a realistic political morality, which is to say, a continued reassessment of traditional moral values in the light of contemporary political actualities. A belief is not scientific because it has been "proved" but because it is continuously tested, and tested by conformity to experience rather than to axiomatic truths. It is in this spirit, too, that I have pressed the claims of an empirical, naturalistic theory of value. An ethics which provides a religious or metaphysical foundation for political morality has still to solve the problem of bringing that morality into connection with the world of political action revealed in experience.

I have viewed political morality, therefore, as a matter of proximate choices, not of ultimate goals. It is customary to criticize politicians for lacking statesmanlike vision; statesmanship, however, consists in seeing clearly what here and now bears on long-run values. Communism has plenty of vision – focussed on a utopian future, but not on the miseries and brutalities of the present. American moralists may be equally visionary when they prefer the ultimate virtue of uncompromising principle to the day-to-day

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gains of a compromised good. "The path of duty lies in what is near, and men seek for it in what is remote." What a political realist Confucius was! Political morality lies in the everyday shaping of policy, not merely in the heroic stand at a time of crisis. The association of morality with heroism and martyrdom is not, I think, intrinsic to morals, but is a part of the contemporary crisis mentality. We talk so much of "the crisis of our time" that we come to think that some single stroke of state will put an end to our problems – one way or the other – once for all. For my part, I do not believe that the atom will destroy all life on earth, nor do I believe that the latest "peace plan" will forever remove its destructive potentialities. I do not believe in the Apocalyptic Moment in politics: every day is the Day of Judgment. In the politics of crisis, law, and morality are both endangered.

NOTES

1. This appears to be belied by R. W. Davenport and the editors of *Fortune:* "The American character and tradition will never be satisfied with a merely defensive or preventive foreign policy. We seek ways to be creative and constructive..." *U.S.A.: The Permanent Revolution* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1951), pages 249 and 250. But the passage continues: "...ways in which we can feel we are extending the American Proposition [*sic!*] to other peoples." It is not this extension that I have in mind by an "ideological offensive."
2. Walter Lippmann, *The Public Philosophy* (New York: Mentor, 1956), pages 80-123, and throughout; Benedetto Croce, *Politics and Morals* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1945), page 145; John Dewey, *German Philosophy and Politics* (New York: Holt, 1915), page 44; Jacques Maritain, *Man and the State* (University of Chicago Press, 1951); Zevedi Barbu, *Democracy and Dictatorship* (New York: Grove, 1956), page 58.
3. Charles Stevenson, *Ethics and Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947).
4. UNESCO, *Human Rights: Comments and Interpretations* (London: Allan Wingate, 1949), page 11.
5. Charles E. Merriam, *Political Power* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1934), page 113.
6. James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth* (New York: Macmillan), Volume II, page 278; Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma* (New York: Harper, 1944).
7. See George R. Stewart, *American Ways of Life* (New York: Doubleday, 1953), pages 69 and 70.
8. Bryce, *op. cit.*, page 632.
9. *Job* XXXI, 13-15.

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10. "... The number of human beings sacrificed in late prehistoric and historic times must be reckoned in thousands of millions, all of them immolated to the gods in behalf of the welfare of the community." Homer W. Smith, *Man and His Gods* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1956), page 134.
11. See, for instance, M. J. Hillenbrand, *Power and Morals* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), page 69: "... No system of political ethics which *demands* the obedience of men on the basis of moral obligation can have validity unless it involves certain concepts which, taken together, equal the natural law, no matter how reluctant men are to use that designation."
12. Jeremy Bentham, *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (Oxford University Press, 1923), page 18 n.
13. John Dewey, *Freedom and Culture* (New York: Putnam, 1939), page 29.
14. John Dewey, "Theory of Valuation," *International Encyclopedia of Unified Science* (University of Chicago Press, 1939), Volume II, No. 4.
15. C. I. Lewis, *An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation* (La Salle: Open Court, 1946).
16. Dewey, *Freedom and Culture, op. cit.*, page 104.
17. J. Ortega y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses* (New York: Mentor, 1950).
18. W. E. Lecky, *History of European Morals* (New York: Appleton, 1929), Volume I, page 88.
19. Bryce, *op. cit.*, Volume II, page 458.
20. George Santayana, *Character and Opinion in the United States* (New York: Doubleday, 1956), page 27.
21. Quoted by David Riesman *et al.*, *The Lonely Crowd* (New York: Doubleday, 1953), page 200.
22. Quoted by D. W. Brogan, *The American Character* (New York: Vintage, 1956), pages 75 and 76.
23. Harold J. Laski, *The American Democracy* (New York: Viking, 1948), page 738.
24. Laski, *op. cit.*, pages 719 and 720.
25. Dewey, *Freedom and Culture, op. cit.*, page 154.

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The Evolution of Contemporary American Values

CLYDE KLUCKHOHN

I. SOME RESULTS OF RESEARCH

IN THIS first section I want to bring the reader a little closer to representative examples of actual investigation of contemporary American values and of value changes over the past generation and differences between living generations. By quotations and paraphrase-digests I hope to give the reader an idea of the range and variety of these studies and also of their limitations for our purposes. I shall have to be selective, excluding in this condensed version much of the research material at hand.

A. CONTEMPORARY VALUES

I shall draw from selected empirical studies which I consider "firm" within the limits of their conceptual schemes and the particular populations examined. These studies fall into two categories: (1) "miscellaneous" and (2) those directly pertinent to our interests. In the latter category there are two bodies of data of considerable substance: (*a*) on the ideology of American business and (*b*) on the values of college students. Actually, we could be much worse off. For, as has often been said, this is "a business man's civilization." The college group, in its turn, has the advantage of being a sample from a population that will presumably give this country a large share of its future leaders. We may even hope to gain some hints as to value drifts because of the age difference between business leaders and students, though allowance must always be made for the alterations that occur with aging – quite apart from secular variations in values.

First, however, to give perspective, I want to present a deliberately miscellaneous selection from materials that are not easy to relate with confidence to our central questions.

1. MISCELLANEOUS

The first statement (primarily in psychological terms) is based on a small (sixty-nine) but very carefully selected sample of adult

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American men from the Boston area and comes from a report (Roseborough and Phillips, 1953) on but a single instrument used in the Russian Research Center study of Americans. But these findings fit beautifully with the results of other instruments administered to the same group and with the conclusions of other investigators working at about the same period in other parts of the country and using different methods:

> In viewing others, the Americans place emphasis upon the relationship they have with others. They perceive others either in terms of themselves or in terms of the others' performance. They want others to think well of them; they want the affection of others; they want others to be easy to get along with. They admire others who perform well and successfully, or for that matter, who just perform. They admire people who are sociable, sensible, strong and sincere. They are critical of inadequate or no performance by others, of unsociable people, of irresponsibility, of indecision. They are critical of overbearing people and of people with unusual or defective physical appearance. They are critical of themselves, of their own inadequate performance and physical appearance and of their failure to live up to the expectations of others.
>
> This emphasis on social relationships and on performance coincides with the action choices the Americans make in strain situations in which other people are involved. The two major responses are to perform more adequately or to become upset . . . both imply the concentration of attention on the job and on the relationship of the actor to the people involved in it. These are precisely the foci for their judgment of other people. The Americans tend to view the qualities of positions rather than the qualities of the people filling those positions. Other people are therefore conceived representatively rather than uniquely. Yet the self is conceived uniquely. With these two points of view, one can be very hurt if one discovers one is not thought well of; one can be very angry if the duties of a position are not fulfilled and one is let down. But the importance of performing well and the lack of importance of the unique qualities of other people prevent, on the one hand, letting one's "hurt" affect one to the point where all is lost and withdrawal into a suffering aloneness is the only solution, and on the other, directing one's anger against the culprit and causing him to suffer for his "personal" sins. Hurt is a possible response but if the Americans want people to think well of them they cannot remain hurt: they must perform better. Anger is also possible but they cannot remain angry, for to do so anger must have a particularistic focus. Irresponsibility, indecision, poor performance are qualities of others about which something can be done; they are not qualities which must leave the actor in a helpless state of rage which nothing but punishment can assuage.

Second, let us turn – even though it may be questioned how applicable this is to the college-educated, middle class group I have

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taken as my central point of reference – to the Wolfenstein and Leites (1950) content analysis of the plots of all American "A" films with a contemporary setting released in New York City for the year following September 1, 1945, and all American "A" melodramas released in New York City from September 1, 1946, to January 1, 1948:

> The major plot configuration in American films contrasts with both the British and the French. Winning is terrifically important and always possible though it may be a tough fight. The conflict is not an internal one; it is not our own impulses which endanger us or our own scruples that stand in our way. The hazards are all external, but they are not rooted in the nature of life itself. They are the hazards of a particular situation with which we find ourselves confronted. The hero is typically in a strange town where there are apt to be dangerous men and women of ambiguous character and where the forces of law and order are not to be relied on. If he sizes up the situation correctly, if he does not go off halfcocked but is still able to beat the other fellow to the punch once he is sure who the enemy is, if he relies on no one but himself, if he demands sufficient evidence of virtue from the girl, he will emerge triumphant. He will defeat the dangerous men, get the right girl, and show the authorities what's what.
>
> When he is a child, he is the comic hero, showing off, blundering, cocky, scared, called on to perform beyond his capacities, and pulling through by surprising spurts of activity and with the help of favorable circumstances. He is completely harmless, free from sexual or aggressive impulses, and the world around him reflects his own innocuous character. Its threats are playful and its reproaches ridiculous. When he is a man he is the melodrama hero and the world changes to reflect his changed potentialities; it becomes dangerous and seriously accusing, and launches him on his fighting career. The majority of the melodramas show him coming through successfully. A minority reveal various perils which lie off the main track; they are cautionary tales. The hero may succumb to his attacker; this is his bad dream. The men around him may be less dangerous than he suspects. Under the delusion that he attacks in self-defense, he may initiate hostilities; then he will lose. In this case he is crazy. Without being deluded to this extent, out of greed and over-confidence, he may try to get away with murder; he commits the crime of which he is usually only suspected and he has to pay for it. The girl may turn out to be worse than he believed. He will have to go off without her; then he is lonely. He may not be able to produce anyone on whom to pin the blame for the crimes of which he is falsely accused; then he is a victim of circumstances. If circumstances fail to collaborate with his need to blame someone else, he may even end by blaming himself. These are the various hazards which the usual melodrama hero safely passes on the way.
>
> The fantasy which provides for defeating dangerous men, winning

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the right girl, and coming out in the clear is produced under the auspices of two major mechanisms: projection and denial. Self-accusations are embodied in the blundering police and destructive impulses in the unprovoked attacker. The beloved woman seems to be involved with another man but investigation ends in the gratifying demonstration that she never loved anyone but the hero. The above disappointment to which the French movie hero is repeatedly exposed is here denied.

The external world may be dangerous but manageable, or, at other times, uncontrollable but gratifying. Where things seem to get out of control the results turn out to be wish-fulfilling. The overturning automobile throws the girl into the hero's arms, the rocking boat tosses the heroine's rival into the waves. The world that is uncontrollable but gratifying expresses an omnipotence fantasy while at the same time eliminating guilt. As soon as the internal problem is replaced by an external one, we can see the promise of success. The hero suffering from kleptomania becomes involved in investigating the activities of a gang of thieves; the amnesiac hero pursues his memories only long enough to unearth clues of someone else's crime before he rises impatiently from the psychiatrist's couch to embark on a successful detective job.

The world, which is not effectively policed, does not need to be policed at all. The hero, the self-appointed investigator and agent of justice, is able to set things right independently. The world thus appears as a kind of workable anarchic arrangement where, although hostilities are far from eliminated, life need not be nasty, brutish, and short, at any rate not for anyone we care about. The unofficial supervisors of private morals, the comic onlookers, are just as superfluous as the police. No one has any intention of doing anything naughty; only the mistakenly suspicious onlooker fails to recognize the natural goodness of the clean-cut young people.

American film plots are pervaded by false appearances. In this shadowy but temporarily vivid guise, the content of what is projected and denied tends to reappear. It is in false appearances that the forbidden wishes are realized which the hero and heroine so rarely carry into action. In a false appearance the heroine is promiscuous, the hero is a murderer, the young couple carry on an illicit affair, two men friends share the favors of a woman. This device makes it possible for us to eat our cake and have it, since we can enjoy the suggested wish-fulfillments without empathic guilt; we know that the characters with whom we identify have not done anything. The contention of American films is that we should not feel guilty for mere wishes. The hero and heroine are threatened with penalties for the incriminating appearance but in the end are absolved. The misguided police or the foolish onlooker in comedies conveys a self-accusation from which the hero and heroine struggle to dissociate themselves, a vestige of archaic conscience which is to be dispensed with.

What the plot unfolds is a process of proof. Something is undone rather than done: the false appearance is negated. The hero and heroine do not become committed to any irretrievable act whose consequences they must bear. Nor do they usually undergo any character transformation, en-

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noblement or degradation, gain or loss of hope, acceptance of a new role or the diminution and regrets of age. They succeed in proving what they were all along. They emerge from the shadow of the false appearance. What has changed is other people's impressions of them. Insofar as the hero and heroine may be unsure of who or what they are except as they see themselves mirrored in the eyes of others, they have succeeded in establishing for themselves a desirable identity. Insofar as they struggle against a projected archaic conscience that persecutes the wish as if it were the act, they win a victory for a more tolerant and discriminating morality.

From Stouffer's impressive book (1955) I draw only a few major points that seem most pertinent:

Without exception, each of the 14 types of community leaders tends to be more willing to respect... civil rights.... Women tend, with small but consistent difference, to be less tolerant than men with respect to nonconformists.... The West seems to have the largest proportion of relatively tolerant people on the scale of willingness to tolerate nonconformists, and the South the smallest proportion. The East and Middle West are in-between... metropolitan areas and other cities tend to have a larger proportion of relatively tolerant people than rural areas.... The less educated were less tolerant than the better educated.... Very few Americans are worried or even deeply concerned about either issue [The internal Communist threat and loss of civil liberties]. These issues do not even compare with issues like personal or family economic problems, personal or family health, or other family crises.... If very few are deeply worried about Communism or civil liberties, there are nevertheless many who are interested in the news about such matters.

2. (*a*) Business Ideology

Sutton *et al.* (1956) base their "Values of a Good Society" (Chapter 12) upon a scrupulous examination of "public statements of business leaders, the institutional advertisements of large corporations, the literature of such business associations as the United States Chamber of Commerce, the Committee for Economic Development, and the National Association of Manufacturers." The following quotations cover the principal points:

A note of individualism sounds through the business creed like the pitch in a Byzantine choir.... Individualism has two main aspects, an injunction of responsiblity and an affirmation of freedom. First, it involves individual moral responsibility in the sense that each individual must direct his actions according to moral norms and be prepared to accept the consequences of his actions.... Second, it asserts the desirability of autonomous choices by individuals in their own interest.

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...Materialism complements individualism. As consumption goods, material riches gratify individual needs. More important, the material emphases on thrift, saving, and capital accumulation are a necessary condition of personal autonomy. Both material advantages and productivity are based on moral qualities.... The business creed becomes ambiguous over the ultimate significance it assigns to material abundance; it certainly does not advocate a sybaritic enjoyment of wealth.

...Practical realism complements individualism. It stresses the importance of those problems which no adult can avoid, and it demands that each individual meet them with competence.... Close attention to the practical side of life demands a kind of relentless activity.... The emphasis on sheer activity and effort in the creed has its natural complements in high valuations of rationality, adventure, and progress....

...It is because of its stress on fair competition and equal opportunity that the business creed may be called egalitarian or democratic.

...The achievements of American capitalism vaunted in the creed are nearly all concerned with the common welfare; they imply an ideal of a democratic distribution of rewards and opportunities.

...A favored means of justifying values and working out their relative priority in our society is that of linking them to our religious heritage.... The place of religion in the business creed is an honored but ill-defined one. The creed bows to the importance of religion, admits seeking religious guidance, but continues to be a predominantly secular ideology.

This picture is quite close to many statements of American values from the early nineteenth century onward. Though there are some obvious continuities, the contrasts to the values of post-World War II college students may be significant *if* one assumes tentatively that the variations are not entirely due to temporary attitudes of youth.

2.(*b*) Contemporary College Students

Jacob (1957) states:

The values of American college students are remarkably homogeneous, considering the variety of their social, economic, racial, and religious backgrounds, and the relatively unrestricted opportunities they have had for freedom of thought and personal development.

Jacob holds that the following profile applies to 75 or 80 per cent:

A dominant characteristic of students in the current generation is that they are *gloriously contented* both in regard to their present day-to-day activity and their outlook for the future. Few of them are worried – about their health, their prospective careers, their family relations, the state of national or international society or the likelihood of their enjoying secure and happy lives. They are supremely confident that their destinies lie within their own control rather than in the grip of external circumstances.

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The great majority of students appear unabashedly *self-centered*. They aspire for material gratifications for themselves and their families. They intend to look out for themselves first and expect others to do likewise.

But this is not the individualistic self-centeredness of the pioneer. American students fully accept the conventions of the contemporary business society as the context within which they will realize their personal desires. They cheerfully expect to conform to the economic status quo and to receive ample rewards for dutiful and productive effort. They anticipate no die-hard struggle for survival of the fittest as each seeks to gratify his own desires, but rather an abundance for all as each one teams up with his fellow self-seekers in appointed places on the American assembly-line.

Social harmony with an *easy tolerance of diversity* pervades the student environment. Conformists themselves, the American students see little need to insist that each and every person be and behave just like themselves. They are for the most part (with some allowance for sectional difference) ready to live in a mobile society, without racial, ethnic or income barriers. But they do not intend to crusade for non-discrimination, merely to accept it as it comes, a necessary convention in a homogenized culture.

The traditional *moral virtues are valued* by almost all students. They respect sincerity, honesty, loyalty, as proper standards of conduct for decent people. But they are not inclined to censor those who choose to depart from these canons. Indeed they consider laxity a prevalent phenomenon, even more prevalent than the facts seem to warrent. Nor do they feel personally bound to unbending consistency in observing the code, especially when a lapse is socially sanctioned. For instance, standards are generally low in regard to academic honesty, systematic cheating being a common practice rather than the exception at many major institutions.

Students normally express a *need for religion* as a part of their lives and make time on most weekends for an hour in church. But there is a " ghostly quality " about the beliefs and practices of many of them, to quote a sensitive observer. Their religion does not carry over to guide and govern important decisions in the secular world. Students expect these to be socially determined. God has little to do with the behavior of men in society, if widespread student judgment be accepted. His place is in church and perhaps in the home, not in business or club or community. He is worshipped, dutifully and with propriety, but the campus is not permeated by a live sense of His presence.

American students are likewise *dutifully responsive towards government*. They expect to obey its laws, pay its taxes, serve in its armed forces — without complaint but without enthusiasm. They will discharge the obligations demanded of them though they will not voluntarily contribute to the public welfare. Nor do they particularly desire an influential voice in public policy. Except for the ritual of voting, they are content to abdicate the citizen's role in the political process and to leave to others the effective power of governmental decision. They are politically irresponsible, and often politically illiterate as well.

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This disposition is reflected in *strangely contradictory attitudes towards international affairs*. Students predict another major war within a dozen years, yet international problems are the least of the concerns to which they expect to give much personal attention during their immediate future. The optimism with which they view their prospects for a good long life belies the seriousness of their gloomy prophecy. They readily propose some form of supra-national government as a means of preventing war, but a very large number display only a limited knowledge of and confidence in the United Nations as an instrument of co-operative international action.

Turning to their immediate preoccupation, the pursuit of an education, students by and large *set great stock by college* in general and their own college in particular. The intensity of their devotion varies quite a bit with the institution and sometimes with the nature of the students' educational goals. And the real point of the devotion is not the same for all. Only a minority seem to value their college education primarily in terms of its intellectual contribution, or its nurturing of personal character and the capacity for responsible human relationships. Vocational preparation, and skill and experience in social "adjustment" head the rewards which students crave from their higher education.

...Against the background of earlier generations, these values of today's students look different. The undergirdings of the Puritan heritage on which the major value assumptions of American society have rested is inconspicuous, if it is present at all. Perhaps these students are the forerunners of a major cultural and ethical revolution, the unconscious ushers of an essentially secular (though nominally religious), self-oriented (though group-conforming) society.

...The values of the college graduate do differ in some respects from the rest of the society. He is more concerned with status, achievement and prestige. Proportionately more college graduates distrust "welfare economics" and "strong" government than in the country at large. Paradoxically they tend to be somewhat more tolerant and less repressive of "radical" ideas and unconventional people, also less prejudiced towards minority groups and alien cultures. They share few of the cold-war suspicions of the subversiveness of college faculties, nor do they support the popular stereotype of the colleges' godlessness. Religiously, they may be less superstitious or other-worldly than their fellow countrymen. The college man or woman thus tends to be more self-important – more conservative – more tolerant – and less fearful of evil forces in this world and outside than those who have not been "higher-educated."

Morris (1956), comparing American students with student samples from Canada, India, China, Japan, and Norway, finds that "orientation to self" is somewhat stronger than in any other national group and "orientation to society" somewhat weaker. Americans stand out for their emphasis upon personal possessions. The factor analysis scores give the impression that the United

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States students are activistic and self-indulgent, less subject to social restraint and less open to receptivity than students from the other nations. On the other hand, the Americans in their choices of "paths of life" emphasized flexibility and many-sidedness (with an explicit place for contemplation and enjoyment as well as for action) far more than any other group.

Gillespie and Allport (1955) say:

> The American pattern, in spite of a prevailing individuality among documents, includes a predominant value which we may call "search for the right, full life." It reflects, however, relatively little interest in the life of the group or nation, and little awareness of the political and social context of the American student's existence. A strong flavor of privatism marks the sample.
>
> ... In studying "paths of life" Charles Morris discovered that Americans, more frequently than Indians, Chinese, and Japanese, subscribed to a way of life that he calls "dynamic integration of diversity," a finding strongly supported by our study....
>
> By contrast, the qualities often ascribed to Americans—competitiveness, desire for success, and personal ambition—are mentioned rather more often in autobiographies by students in countries of newer nationalism, where aspirations for achievement are high, viz., Mexico, Egypt, and among the Bantu. We are faced here with the question whether the American character, as represented in youth born during the Great Depression, grown up during a world war, and living since the war in a nation where prosperity and fear are both widespread, is not in fact markedly altered from what it was in earlier times.
>
> The American pattern of values seems to contrast also with the European pattern represented by students in France, Italy, and Germany who more often mention their desire to "form a character" (*former, formare, Bildung*), to "become a distinctive personality."... Americans, by contrast, seem less concerned about self-consistency and more disposed to welcome diversity even at the expense of firmness and integration.
>
> Another prominent American characteristic is the relatively low interest in social problems. Poverty, delinquency, politics, and race relations are less frequently mentioned in American documents than in those of most other lands.
>
> ... In keeping with his search for a rich, full life, and with his unconcern for social problems, we find other evidence that the American student, by and large, manages to separate himself from the political and social context of his existence. The term privatism has been used to label this particular state of mind. G. A. Almond describes the trait this way: "The American is primarily concerned with 'private' values, as distinguished from social-group, political, or religious-moral values. His concern with private, worldly success is his most absorbing aim. In this regard it may be suggested by way of hypothesis that in other cultures there is a greater stress on corporate loyalties and values and a greater personal in-

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volvement with political issues or with other-worldly religious values." Our data tend to prove Almond right in his hypothesis, except that our American students are not conspicuously low in religious interests.

Allport (1950) reports upon the religious values of Harvard, Radcliffe, and Miami University students in 1946-1947:

> 1) Most students feel the need of including a religious sentiment somewhere within their maturing personalities; 2) for the most part they believe in a God, though their view is not usually that of the traditional theistic variety; 3) a bare quarter are in essential matters orthodox and historically faithful to theological dogma; 4) the majority maintain some of the forms of traditional religious practices including prayer; 5) but the majority are clearly dissatisfied with institutional religion as it exists, so much so that 40 per cent of those who feel a religious need yet repudiate the church in which they were reared. If we take the entire student population who have had a religious upbringing, including those who feel no religious need and those who do, we find that 56 per cent reject the church in which they were trained.

B. CHANGING VALUES AND GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

Stouffer's (1955) data show that "the older generation was less tolerant of non-conformists than the younger generation." He also notes that within each group the less educated were less tolerant than the better educated. Allport (1950) compares some of his findings made in 1946-1947 with findings on Syracuse students in 1926 and University of Wisconsin students in 1930. Attitudes of the Syracuse group on the need for religion and on the current state of institutional religion were not very different from those of Allport's samples, though the Wisconsin students exhibited more unfavorable responses to the church. Only 10 per cent of the Syracuse students abstained altogether from church attendance and devotional practices, as against nearly a third in 1946-1947. Not more than 10 or 15 per cent of a group of Colorado students expressed the opinion that man has a spiritual as well as a biological and psychological nature (Chambers, 1956).

Riesman (1956), on the basis of examination of 25-year reports from classes of Ivy League colleges and study of 183 *Time*-commissioned interviews with 1955 graduating seniors from nine colleges and universities, reached the following views on trends:

> 1) Hardly any of the class of 1955 would ever want to live in New York in order to make a million, or in any other big city. "No life in the ulcer belt for me," as one of them says, explaining why....

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2) Going over our class reports, . . . I have detected a tendency to emphasize increasingly the non-vocation aspects . . . the family and hobbies and, markedly . . . the fabulous array of philanthropic and civic activities. . . . Many . . . have . . . moved to the suburbs for the benefit of the children, or even become exurbanites for the sake of a better family life.

3) Although they [the 1955 group] enter a far more prosperous and secure world in economic terms, they appear in more of a hurry – not from a driving ambition which, as we shall see, not many have, but because they have already made up their minds as to exactly who they are and exactly where they want to go on the superhighway of their chosen corporation or profession.

4) And he [a Princeton senior] points out that he doesn't have the brass his father had to be a lone wolf – a comparison a number of them make, in almost every case with detached admiration for the old man's toughness, but with hardly any despondency for not living up to him as a model.

II. RECONSTRUCTION

Let me start somewhat negatively by trying to expose what I regard as some of the fallacies or misunderstandings inherent in the three conclusions about value shifts which, I suspect, appear most frequently in popular writings and in private conversations. These we can label with familiar catchwords: "the lawlessness of the young," "conformity," and "return to religion."

There is always some conflict between generations, and this conflict is exacerbated in rapidly changing societies, of which the United States has always been an extreme example. Each elder generation is disturbed because the younger violates law and custom. One has only to dip into a source like Calhoun (1945) to realize that outraged laments upon "juvenile delinquency" and "the disintegration of the family" have a very long and repetitive history upon this continent. Moreover, it is a fact which commentators have noted through the decades that there has always been a distinctively "lawless" strain in American culture. A characteristically American rationale is found in *Huckleberry Finn:*

> Well, then, says I, what's the use you learning to do right when it's troublesome to do right and ain't no trouble to do wrong, and the wages is just the same? I was stuck. I couldn't answer that. So I reckoned I wouldn't bother no more about it, but after this always do whichever come handiest at the time.

But I have encountered no hard evidence whatsoever that this strain is on the increase in very recent times. If anything, one

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wonders if it is not less manifest than one might anticipate in this country in a postwar period of confusion and uncertainty.

"Conformity" must not be allowed to mask too many questions. Is it really, as alleged, a conformity of anxiety or of automatism? Or is it a fairly deliberate conformity of choice which follows upon the weakening of the Puritan ethic with its demands for exhibitionistic achievement, unbridled "individualism," and competition? An outward conformity of behavior or an inward conformity of thought and feeling? We must remember, as Mead (1956) points out, that much of the indignation over the "conformity" of the young comes from the intellectuals who in the twenties and thirties made nonconformity a rampant virtue and whose ego stature is diminished if their children reject this value.

Bird (1957) says:

> Americans expect the young to overthrow – in the name of progress – at least part of the values of their parents. But those born in 1930 have found their parents largely without oppressive values. How are you going to rebel against a generation which made a cult of rebellion; which, in the confession of its spokesman Malcolm Cowley, felt that "our lives were directed by Puritan standards that were not our own, that society in general was terribly secure, unexciting, middle-class"?

Also, while conformity in some sense is probably a heightened value for the younger generation, the data indicate that this goes along with greater tolerance for diversity in others (Stouffer, 1955) and indeed a prizing of diversity as a value in itself (Gillespie and Allport, 1955; Morris, 1956).

The religious best sellers and the figures on church membership[1] and attendance do indicate some shift in the values placed upon religion. This trend[2] seems to be usual after a major war. I believe,

[1] One source says 16 per cent of the adult population were church members in 1850, but 59 per cent were members in 1950. (Standards for church membership had, of course, altered markedly.) A Roper poll in 1954 found that nine out of ten Americans believe in the existence of some supreme being; that while in 1942 only two out of ten persons named religious leaders as doing the most good for the country, this percentage had doubled by 1954. A Gallup poll in 1954 "discovered" that 87 per cent of the adult population were church members. We must take such figures seriously but – for varied and obvious reasons – not *too* seriously.

[2] Evidence that this trend is not uniform has already been presented. There can be added the fact (Berger, 1957) that 59 per cent of American business executives in 1950 indicated *no* religious preference, whereas the corresponding figure for 1925 was only 37 per cent.

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however, that there is more than this to the phenomenon. On the other hand, I doubt – except for the fundamentalist and emotional sects – that it means a "return to religion" in the meaning of daily search for divine guidance in one's daily life or of taking the pleasing of a personal God as one's primary goal. Rather, I think the "return to religion" a manifestation of two more fundamental value shifts: (*a*) increasing stress upon affiliation with stable groups; (*b*) increasing recognition of the need for explicit and shared values.

The changes in American values during the past generation are in part a consequence of processes steadily affecting all "advanced" industrial societies (cf. Inkeles and Rossi, 1956), in part the result of more temporary political and economic currents playing upon the whole world in the mid-twentieth century. But in both cases the specific forms are recognizably American, and treat them I shall as such rather than attempt to relate them to the world-wide context.

Many of the sign posts detected by different observers point in the same direction. We have again, to be sure, the possibility that the consonance derives from *Zeitgeist* or from parrotings – with variations – of a few popular formulations. It is certain, for instance, in some cases and probable in others that Riesman's writings have been influential. On the other hand, some work (e.g., Morris, 1956) was done (though not published) prior to *The Lonely Crowd*, and it may be questioned whether Riesman's ideas (as opposed to his catchy phrases) were profoundly original; it seems more likely that he brought together and dramatized much that many others had already said in part on the basis of their researches or their more diffuse observations. The one small empirical test of Riesman to date (Dornbusch, 1957) confirms his hypothesis, but suggests that "other-directedness" actually had more salience in the thirties than at present.

This raises two broad questions pertinent to almost everything said in this paper:

1) The general question of time lag. For example, are the changes in value emphases manifested by the generation born in the late twenties and early thirties really currents pouring over a watershed from that period? Did the younger parents of that epoch – their own explicitly stated values to the contrary notwithstanding – communicate to their children (in the home, in the schools to which

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they sent them, etc.) a series of "sets" which made them less rampant "individualists," less committed to hard work in a single direction and to "success" and the like?

2) The specific question of time lag between "class" and "mass" groups. Hopson (1952) showed that mass media of the 1940-1949 period reflected about the same value shifts which were perceptible in best sellers read by the college-educated classes in the 1907-1946 period. Differentials of this sort may well be the rule.

I know that I can't answer these questions. But a few remarks may clarify what is to follow. First, when I speak of such matters as "the decline of the Protestant Ethic" I am merely calling attention to certain phenomena without making any dogmatic assumptions as to when and how this trend emerged or even – necessarily – any assumption that, if we knew enough, we could not discern the beginnings of a countertrend among the young children of the "found" (Riesman, 1956) or "unlost" (Bird, 1957) generation. Second, my eye is upon the middle class (roughly, though not precisely, equivalent to "college-educated") younger generation. I recognize, for instance, that there are highly vocal protests (e.g., Lindner, 1953, 1956; Fromm, 1955) against the gospel of adjustment, but I also note that those with which I am familiar come almost[3] exclusively from representatives of the older generation and/or those of European background and/or from members of radical political groups.[4] I neither assert nor deny that my postulated value shifts apply to the lower classes and the lower middle class, though some studies (e.g., Friedman, 1956) claim that the picture is quite different among those who have not been so richly rewarded by our society and, among these, especially within the subgroups adhering to fundamentalist or emotionalist religious sects. Yet the Schneider-Dornbusch book (1958) indicates that among those who read inspirational religious literature the weakening of the Puritan Ethic has already occurred.

The most generally agreed upon, the best documented, and, I

[3]For example, *The New York Times* for March 3, 1957, reported that students were asking themselves "whether they were giving sufficient thought on how to meet the pressures against individualism." But note: *a*) the college in question was Sarah Lawrence, and *b*) at this conference they were harangued by leading older men who are well known for carrying this particular torch.

[4]I am not certain whether the little magazine *Dissent* comes from this category, but it would appear to do so.

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believe, the most pervasive value shift is what Whyte (1956) has called "the decline of the Protestant Ethic." Connected with and influenced by this fundamental shift are a number of others. The degree to which these shifts may plausibly be traced to a weakening of the Puritan Ethic varies considerably between them. Perhaps a more logical interpretation would be that all changes, including that in the basic ethical conception, are the products of still deeper processes which have not yet been satisfactorily analyzed or named. At any rate, we can be sure that all of the shifts are interconnected and mutually reinforcing and that the decline of the Protestant Ethic is peculiarly palpable and – at very least – a convenient point of central reference.

EXTERNAL ("SOCIAL") VS. INTERNAL STANDARDS

The above heading does *not* mean greater concern with social welfare, national and international politics, and the like. Brogan (1957) found Americans more politically conscious in 1956 than he did in 1929, but Stouffer (1955) discovered apathy on civil liberties and the internal threat of Communism. Jacob (1957) said: "Most American students desire to separate themselves from their political and social context. They shun civic responsibility and have little interest in public affairs." Morris (1956) showed that American students exhibited considerably less commitment to social causes than Indian, Chinese, and other students abroad; Gillespie and Allport (1955) commented on the "privatism" of American students.

Nevertheless there is a stronger drift toward what some (e.g., Perry, 1949) have called "collective individualism." This *does* mean a sensitivity to the approval of others, a strong need to be liked, a respect for the standards of the group with which one has one's primary identification rather than for the demands of one's own private "conscience." This is Riesman's "other-directed,"[5] "radar-oriented" type of character. Riesman's "other-directed" is very similar to Fromm's "personality of the market place," just as his "autonomous" equates to Fromm's "productive" personality. It represents nothing new among American values but rather a heightening and an appreciably different form. Tocqueville wrote:

[5] Aldridge (1955) says that the last fifty years of the American novel shows a gradual movement away from "inner-directed" "toward the phase of at least incipient 'other-direction.'"

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I know of no country in which there is so little independence of mind and real freedom of discussion as in America. The will of man is not shattered, but softened, bent, and guided; men are seldom forced by it to act, but they are constantly restrained from acting. Such a power does not destroy, but it prevents existence; it does not tyrannize, but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes, and stupefies a people.... The majority no longer says: "You shall think as I do or you shall die;" but it says: "You are free to think differently from me and to retain your life, your property, and all that you possess; but you are henceforth a stranger among your people. You may retain your civil rights, but they will be useless to you, for you will never be chosen by your fellow citizens if you solicit their votes; and they will affect to scorn you if you ask for their esteem.

"You will remain among men, but you will be deprived of the rights of mankind. Your fellow creatures will shun you like an impure being; and even those who believe in your innocence will abandon you, lest they should be shunned in their turn. Go in peace! I have given you your life, but it is an existence worse than death."

It is true that American official standards have always been better described in terms of "public approval" than as either "materialistic" or "idealistic." There is also considerable truth in the saying that "standardization is the primal crime of democracy." Yet it is ridiculous to accept literally the statements of superficial European observers about "the dreary uniformity of American life"[6] (cf., Drucker, 1952). We must only grant with Perry (1949) that while Americans do not easily accept authority from above, they have ever been "highly vulnerable to the impersonal and unorganized authority of their social environment."

Yet it is possible that today's kind of "conformity" may actually be a step toward more genuine individuality in the United States. "Conformity" is less of a personal and psychological problem — less tinged with anxiety and guilt.[7] If one accepts outwardly the

[6] Actually, as Riesman (1956, page 50) says: "Two processes appear to be going on simultaneously in this country: homogenization and differentiation. Equalization is proceeding between city and country, between the social and occupational strata and between the sexes . . . by the same token, differentiation proceeds among the age-grades, and remains large . . . between North and South and between the college educated and those of lesser academic exposure."

[7] I have a hunch — from reading some of the literature on Puritanism in both its New England and its frontier forms — that the only way the American Puritan could lower his guilt level was by participating in a group — especially (but not exclusively) a religious group. To the extent that the Puritan Ethic has declined one would expect that the whole problem of conformity would be less compulsive and emotional in both its affirmative and its negative directions.

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conventions of one's group, one may have greater psychic energy to develop and fulfill one's private potentialities as a unique person. I have encountered no substantial evidence that this "conformity" is thoroughgoingly "inward."

There is some visible oiliness and slickness on the surface of American life as notably represented by Hollywood and the Luce publications. But are these the main currents? I think not. Surely the last two presidential elections, with their split votes, indicate that Americans are not altogether at the mercy of either "gimmick specialists" or a single-minded conformity. And on the contemporary American scene "conformity" itself takes two forms which – in their prevalence – are somewhat new. The second of these I shall comment upon under the heading "Heterogeneity as a Value." The first is that "conformity" arises more from active choice that departs from a strengthened value put upon harmony within primary social groups, less from fear of social ostracism. I believe that this "social harmony" value is in part a response to the much talked of "alienation" of contemporary men;[8] in part a response to chaos, confusion, and dispute in the world in general and to the abyss threatened by a potentially immediate future. They learn from the writings of many intellectuals that the best service that historical perspective can provide is that of preparing us for the worst (Muller, 1954, page 362). If disorder is visible all about and impends still more, order in those circumscribed areas becomes immensely precious. Tillich (1953) says: "There are periods in history in which the element of freedom predominates, and there are periods in which fate and necessity prevail. The latter is true of our day." The opening paragraph in *The Power Elite* (Mills, 1956) states: "Great changes . . . from every side . . . now press upon men and women of the mass society, who . . . feel they are without purpose in an epoch in which they are without power." Whether these generalizations be factually correct or not, they are prevalent and are influential upon thought and behavior. What use to strive endlessly for achievement, to compete blatantly with one's neighbors and with one's rivals in the occupational sphere? Is it not, rather, more sensible to keep the surface of things harmonious, to enjoy what one can while one can? As

[8]Goldschmidt (1951) reports "loneliness" a dominant theme in the romantic short stories of 1950 he studied.

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Whyte (1956) says, "inconspicuous consumption" is now a higher value than "conspicuous consumption"; ". . . the old urge to keep up with the Joneses has been replaced by the need to keep *down* with the Joneses" (Bird, 1957). At any rate, I am convinced that much of the contemporary "conformity" springs from deliberate and somewhat reflective choice based both upon realization of the uncertainty of things and upon recognition of the implacable necessities of gigantic organizations. Possibly "conformity" may also be a reaction to exhaustion brought about by the speed and number of changes.[9]

HEDONISTIC, PRESENT-TIME ORIENTATION

Looking forward optimistically, planning and working toward the future – this hallmark of the Puritan Ethic has surely waned. At least the distant future has been drawn into the very near future. One[10] has children, several of them,[11] now while one can, because who knows where the husband will be after the savings have been accumulated that will "provide properly" for them? A little later one uses one's meager accumulations as a down payment on a comfortable house rather than putting them into annuities or other provision for the college education of the children, for "the house will mean a great deal to us and the children now, and you can't tell if inflation would wipe out our savings anyway or if all college education will be provided by the Government when they are ready for it."[12]

I do not employ "hedonism" in the pejorative sense, since it strikes me that there is considerably less hedonism of this sort than there was in the decade after World War I. I mean, rather, the values which the Puritan Ethic never placed upon recreation (except as a means to the end of more effective work), pleasure, leisure, and aesthetic and expressive activities. Americans enjoy themselves more and with less guilt than ever before. Moreover,

[9] Cf. Goldman (1956, page 259): "In the winter of 1953-1954, for the first time in twenty years, the term 'conservative' was being used in the United States widely and without embarrassment."

[10] Especially "the literate and hopeful."

[11] The number of women with three or more children has doubled in twenty years. The increase is particularly marked among college-educated women.

[12] Whether this be "cause" or "effect" or both, the tax law which encourages *using* earnings is significant.

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there has been a remarkable diversification and broadening of the base of leisure-time activities within the population. Between 1940 and 1950 ticket sales for the legitimate theatre and the opera went up 85 per cent as against only 42 per cent for motion pictures. Attendance at concerts of serious music jumped 88 per cent; more dollars were spent for them in 1951 than for baseball. By 1951 there were 659 "symphonic groups" in the United States and the number of towns and cities having regular concert series had doubled since 1940. Sales of paintings, attendance at art museums, and the number of art museums had increased at an almost fantastic rate. The sales of art supplies were ten times as great in 1949 as in 1939. Gardening, photography, *participation* in sports, foreign travel – all gained fabulously.[18] In part – but only in part – these changes were a reflection of economic prosperity. Americans have long been comfort loving, and they continue to be, but their activities, aesthetic and expressive, have expanded greatly beyond mere "comfort." There is "the boom in American history" (Hale, 1955), to mention only one further example.

As far as "taste" is concerned, I know, of course, that there is another aspect to the story. But Brogan (1953) is right when he says:

> There are . . . no fundamental differences in the problem of popular taste in Europe and in America. . . . We are all in the same boat together or in the same kind of boats, for the American boat is bigger and better. But it is not fundamentally different. . . . We are the first civilization in which the canons of taste are laid down by the majority of the inhabitants of a civilization that has largely had its roots with its traditional culture cut and is busy manufacturing a new culture, with a speed and universality that modern technology alone makes possible.

And I would say that there is abundant evidence that popular taste in the United States is improving.

Barzun (1956) links the spread of aesthetic interests to the new value emphasis upon the immediate social group:

> The new amateur, then, is very much a product of industry and social equality. But he is also moved by more obscure forces. Why, with the world's great artists mechanically at his beck and call, does he want to paint and play, as we say, personally? Why do communities increasingly

[18] The figures in this paragraph are from Turck (1952) and Allen (1952). For other information and interpretation see the essays on leisure, aesthetics, and mass media in Riesman (1954).

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prefer to be entertained by unprofessional talent nearby and even entrust their bare walls, private or public, to the perilous brush of the modern primitive in their midst? ... One feels on all sides a growing community spirit which relishes what is local and of the group. Further causes are speculative: the family unit has perhaps been replaced by this larger aggregate. Again, the greater leisure and the desire to supplement the life of livelihood with the life of self-cultivation impel people into community enterprises. And what once might have been a religious endeavor is now secularized, taking the form of art, which for a century and a half has been the religion of the intellectual.

In spite of the admiration – sometimes extravagant – which cultivated Europeans have evinced for certain of the American arts, there remains a disposition on the part of both Europeans and Americans to judge the arts in this country on the basis of canons which may be inappropriate. Kouwenhoven (1948) talks interestingly of a distinctively American style (the "vernacular") which runs through various media:

> ... both [skyscrapers and jazz] are climactic achievements of the vernacular tradition in America. Neither implies anything resembling the cultivated tradition's negation of or contempt for the actualities of a civilization founded upon technology and shaped by democratic political and social institutions.... The important thing about the vernacular is that it possesses inherent qualities of vitality and adaptability, of organic as opposed to static form, of energy rather than repose, that are particularly appropriate to the civilization which, during the brief life span of the United States, has transformed the world. (Pages 266 and 268.)

GREATER ACCEPTANCE OF GOVERNMENTAL AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL CONTROL

This requires only brief comment, for it is both instigator and reflection of the value shift just discussed. Valentine (1954) sees the drift toward conformity flowing out of three trends affecting mass society all over the world: 1) The economic trend toward highly industrialized and urbanized society; 2) the political trend toward direct and centralized government; 3) the social trend toward the acceptance only of popular standards of culture.

Protests continue to be made in the United States, even among the young. Harris (1949), reporting on the impressions of a group of Oxford students who visited many American educational institutions, says: "During many a debate one felt that if America went to war, it would be for Private Enterprise against Collectivism rather than for Western civilization against Eastern tyranny." It probably

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remains true (Galantière, 1950) that Europeans still ask what man ought to be, Americans what man ought to do (with a notion of individual independence and responsibility). But in 1957 a Republican senator (Case, 1957) could write:

> But since we believe in these institutions [private property and capitalism] pragmatically, not dogmatically, we have never permitted them to be ends in themselves. We do not shrink from governmental intervention to insure that our economy produce a constantly improved standard of living shared as widely as possible. And we insist that the Government intervene to protect the individual against hardships he cannot master through his own efforts. [cf. Allen, 1952, page 291.]

VALUE UPON "PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH"

However much "conformity" may have increased, no one can argue that attention to the psyche of the individual has dropped out of the picture. On the contrary, concern with "mental health," with the proper psychological atmosphere at home and in the school, and with psychotherapy has risen to proportions that some have, understandably, regarded as obsessive. This rise has been associated with the domestication of psychoanalysis on the American scene and the immense increase in psychological self-consciousness in mass dimensions.

Little review is required, for the phenomena face us daily in conversation, in the movies, in almost every book or periodical we read. I shall only run through a few illustrations by way of reminder. Aldridge (1955) speaks of the "preoccupation with . . . psychological *problems*" in the novels of the forties, and, in the novels of the fifties, of "signs of concentration upon rather thin childhood and domestic situations in which the drama tends to center in a subtle psychic conflict between characters. . . ." Sutton *et al.* (1956, page 399) comment that: "To a remarkable degree, children are now raised according to what are currently conceived to be sound psychological principles rather than according to traditional moral norms." Strunsky (1956) writes of "the cult of personality" in political life. Inkeles (1957) shows that Americans (both those who have had a college education and those who have had only a secondary education) attribute national characteristics to child-rearing and psychological factors more (by a considerable margin) than do samples from eight European countries and from Mexico.

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Mead (1956) makes some perceptive observations:

> ... what increase in self-consciousness can be invoked to explain the present trend which so revolts our systematically and recurrently revolted critics of the American scene? ... This increase in self-conscious reflexive response to partly accurate, partly contrived pictures of what young executives, career girls, Americans overseas or exurbanites do, think, say, feel, what they read, eat, wear and believe, may indeed have lamentable consequences, although they are not the consequences that are immediately prophesied by the critics. ...
>
> ... It may also be suggested that this reflexive state in which we live is a kind of stepchild of some of the most important developments of the last quarter-century – of increased awareness of ourselves as individuals with a partly forgotten past, as members of a culture many of whose values are unformulated but none the less real. It would be easy to blame our present state on an exaggerated self-consciousness which has destroyed both innocence and spontaneity. But it may also be blamed upon those who have used the tools which have been developed by the therapist, the teacher and the research scholar as implements of manipulation within a system which they despised and hated, often quite unfairly, but from which they continued to draw a livelihood. The frustrated novelist who sells his soul to an advertising agency or a public relations firm, the frustrated liberal who condones the use of sensational sex stories to sell a politically liberal newspaper, the cynical reformer who thinks the only way to get members of Congress to do a good deed is to offer them bad rationalizations – these are among the people who, out of disillusion, self-contempt, and contempt for their employers and their audiences, have helped to construct this world of semitruths and manipulated backgrounds and faked shadows within which young people find the images on which to model their lives – and so seem to their elders to be "conforming."

HETEROGENEITY AS A VALUE

I believe that heterogeneity is itself becoming one of the organizing principles of American culture.[14] I think this tendency has two origins. One goes back to the realization of the bewildering rapidity of change and is reflected in an implicit premise of much American life and especially American education: you never can tell what strange oddment of information will be interesting or indeed useful in an unforeseen context. Americans therefore are devoted to newspaper columns and drawings of the "Believe It Or Not" type and to TV programs of the "$64,000 Question" variety. Americans perhaps are following a way of thinking suited to a world in which generalizations are hard to apply.

[14] Schneider and Homans (1956) say: "Perhaps the fundamental characteristic of the American kinship system is the presence of a wide variety of alternate terms."

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The other origin lies in increased experience with cultural diversity and a diminished certainty about the infallible superiority of "the American way of life" in every last idea and detail. One of the massive facts of the last twenty years is the vast jump in the number of Americans who have actually seen other cultures. Twenty million have served in the armed forces, and a high proportion of these have been abroad. It would be naïve to assume that a majority of these have been much affected one way or the other (one small study – Smith, 1945 – indicates the effects are not great), and we all know from personal observation that sometimes the effects are negative.[15] Nevertheless, some are enlightened, and the consequences of this in the body politic gradually become cumulative. It is difficult in the military setting to have other than somewhat artificial and superficial experiences – though a surprising number of individuals manage to do so. Americans traveling in foreign countries since 1945 for pleasure and as civilian representatives of government or business have better opportunities, and the American masses are far less hermetically isolated from firsthand or one-remove contact with "foreign ways" – other than those of immigrants, who were traditionally looked down upon and were, in any case, for the most part not representative of the "higher" levels of their cultures. Finally, there is the circumstance that all fairly well-informed Americans, even if themselves untraveled, are aware – however grudgingly – that the realities of international politics will not permit the writing off of other values and customs as simply "ignorant" or "stupid."

These influences – and others of a more personal and psychological nature – have brought about, even in those who choose themselves to conform to the patterns of their American peer group, a diminution of the single-mindedness of devotion to "the American way" and that positive attachment to diversity as a value which the investigations of Morris and others have revealed. It may be symptomatic that an easterner (Hughes, 1956) finds "tolerance of differences" a distinctive feature of California, that Stouffer reports the Far West "more tolerant" than the other three regions, that

[15] Nevertheless, on the whole, contact does make a difference in the favorable direction. Stouffer attributes the fact that women are less tolerant of nonconformity than men to the circumstance that their social environments are more limited. Adorno *et al.* (1950) also found American women more ethnocentric than American men.

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Morris discovered more "innovation" in the Far West than in his other five regions. Whether one happens to like California and the rest of the Far West, almost all students would agree that – for better or for worse – this is "the America of the future," the "climax" (in the technical anthropological sense) of American culture.[16]

One must not, of course, be too cheerful. Erikson (1950, page 374) warns that the tolerant appraisal of other identities endangers one's own. And not all soberly factual opinion agrees to the increase in acceptance of diversity. One of the investigations in greatest depth (Adorno *et al.*, 1950) finds little spontaneity but much compulsiveness, whether this shows itself in apathy, surface piety, or active racism. These authors conclude that those Americans who are relatively free of ethnocentrism tend to be neurotic and indecisive. They believe the sado-masochistic type is growing in numbers because of a steady increase in monopolistic domination of American life. Likewise, they see the mass media as leading to increased confusion, cynicism, and conformity on the part of Americans.

Having reviewed the evidence, I, however, would put my money on Stouffer's appraisal:

> Great social, economic, and technological forces are operating slowly and imperceptibly on the side of spreading tolerance. The rising level of education and the accompanying decline in authoritarian child-rearing practices increase independence of thought and respect for others whose ideas are different. The increasing geographical movement of people has a similar consequence, as well as the vicarious experiences supplied by the magic of our ever more powerful media of communications.

THE SEARCH FOR VALUES

Among those who have rejected the Puritan Ethic in whole or in part or who are, at most, apathetic toward its tenets, there is often an extremely active search for explicit values that educated men who accept mass organizations as the normal centers of their lives

[16] Andrews (1955) distinguishes two main trends in American architecture and says of the Veblenites (e.g., Gropius): ". . . no modern architect has come closer to sharing the economist's suspicion that epidemic for epidemic, the Black Plague would be more pleasant than rampant individualism. . . . But California is the promised land of the Jacobites, and nowhere else in the United States have so many architects built so many buildings telling in their warmth and in their ease the individuality of their creators." (Pages 256 and 271.)

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can believe in and live by.[17] This is evidenced by the "return to religion," by the staggering number of articles on ethics and values in literary and middle-brow journals, by the fact that business groups (e.g., the Advertising Council and the Corning Glass Works) have staged expensive round tables on this subject. This trend is intensified by the concern of thoughtful citizens with the growing belief abroad that American values are either negative or *status quo* ones (preservation of the eighteenth-century values of the founding fathers – cf., Robinson, 1949). Indeed I would say flatly that one of the outstanding differences between the climate today and that of a generation ago is the recognition of the need for positive and explicit values.

TREND TOWARD EQUALIZATION OF ROLES OF MEN AND WOMEN

Another aspect of the withering of the Puritan Ethic is that American fathers are seldom "patriarchs" any longer. There is rough agreement as to some of the main facts. Women are competing successfully in the occupational system (the percentage of women in the labor force has doubled in sixty-five years);[18] in all of the principal categories some women occupy leading positions. Women are more than ever "the social cynosure" (La Barre, 1946). Thurber (1954), after an analysis of plays of the last generation, sees a "feminization" of the legitimate theatre in the United States: decreasing attention to actors, more to actresses, decrease in the number of plays centering on men. Men (or at any rate middle class men) undertake domestic duties (cooking, changing diapers and other care of children, chores around the home, etc.) much more frequently than a generation ago. Some of this latter must be attributed to situational factors: shortage and expensiveness of domestic help, or increased significance of wives' contribution to the family income. But I think it clear that value change is likewise involved.

Analysis by my tutees of the same comic strips in 1956 and in 1929 indicates that in 1956 men are portrayed more frequently as dominated by their wives, henpecked, less mature, and less prac-

[17] There has been, as Leites (1948, page 4) says, a marked decline in "the degree of felt certainty in moral reactions."

[18] A *Woman's Home Companion* survey in 1950 showed that 52 per cent of American women asserted a preference to remain exclusively housewives. (Goldschmidt, 1951.)

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tically intelligent than women. A United Press dispatch of March, 1957, reports that: "The farmer and his wife have combined jobs. . . . Once the farmer was king of his acreage, and his wife was queen of the farm home. But now the farmer and his wife plan and work together on long-range family goals."

Only on details have I detected any doubts as to the trend. On its significance, however, on what it means as regards marriage, the family, the present satisfactions and dissatisfactions of women and men, there is great argument. A special issue of *Life* (December 24, 1956) quotes representative women (and some men). A man says: "My wife works, and I like it." A woman gave up a good job "because something more important was always left undone." Kardiner (1954) writes a chapter on "The Flight from Masculinity." Many interviews with soldiers who have married Japanese or German wives in preference to American have quoted them to the effect that "American women aren't really women" or "American women want to have it both ways."

Fromm (1956) takes a dim view of both sexes: "Automatons do not love; alienated men do not care. What is praised by marriage counselors is a team relation between two people who manipulate each other with the right techniques, and whose love is essentially a haven from an otherwise intolerable loneliness, an *egotism à deux*." Bryson (1953) summarizes a chapter written by my wife as follows:

> Florence R. Kluckhohn lays bare the general discontent of modern American woman, who is not generally pleased by the changes that have taken place in her status in the past two centuries. She may have lived a hard life, as a colonial wife and mother, but she had a place of practical and spiritual importance in her civilization and had her full share of honor. Now she has, with a measure of success, entered the competition for other values, hitherto reserved for masculine competitors, but she is still also housewife and not much admired for efficiency in either role.

About all we can conclude is that there is considerable tension over this change in value (and situation). As Lynes (1953) remarks: "Husbands now do a large part of the work once allocated to wives, but the feminist beefing of wives is now loud in the land."

III. DISCUSSION

What one makes of all the views that have been reported and of such research findings as there are depends a good deal upon one's own value system and personality perspective. The most contro-

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versial issue is: How much *and what kind* of conformity is there at present? I think I have marshaled some evidence to the effect that however much compliance there may be there is no complete "internal" acceptance of any one conventional point of view on everything or any general notion that the deviation *of others* from that viewpoint is "wrong" or "bad." Indeed I would argue that the evidence is to the effect that Americans have matured somewhat since de Tocqueville wrote:

> Not only does he mistrust his strength, but he even doubts of his right; and he is very near acknowledging that he is in the wrong, when the greater number of his countrymen assert that he is so. The majority do not need to force him; they convince him. (Vol. II, pages 275-276.)

And I believe that Fromm (1950, page 83) exhibits a European bias and a lack of comprehension of the American matrix of values when he says:

> . . . the vast majority of people in our culture are well adjusted because they have given up the battle for independence sooner and more radically than the neurotic person. They have accepted the judgment of the majority so completely that they have been spared the sharp pain of conflict which the neurotic person goes through. While they are healthy from the standpoint of "adjustment," they are more sick than the neurotic person from the standpoint of the realization of their aims as human beings.

We can, of course, agree with Meyer (1955) that there exists a "lag":

> The moral degeneration insofar as it exists today as well as our neurotic fears and desire for conformity are due to the fact that our social cohesion and mutual sympathies . . . have been shattered by a scientific and technological revolution without parallel in history for its rapid tempo and for the radical transformations it has brought about in our social structure. Man has been permanently and finally exiled from his comfortable anthropocentric, geocentric universe . . . the conditions of our lives have been basically more altered in the last fifty years than they were in the previous two or even three thousand years. But in our thoughts and feelings we are still living in a bygone era, anywhere from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century.

But perhaps there is equally a "lag" in our interpretations. Good observers such as Granville Hicks (1956) make observations of the following order: "When I look about at my neighbors, I see no evidence that they are leading standardized lives." Individuality

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is hard to extinguish. As Strunsky (1956) remarks: "Man does not easily surrender his autonomous nature or concede his irrelevance. When denied by circumstance, he creates his own occasions of individuality, contriving them out of the very forms which conspire to repress them." Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. (1952) is right in saying: "The only answer to mass culture, of course, lies in the affirmation of America, not as a uniform society, but as a various and pluralistic society made up of many groups with diverse interests." The predilection for diversity appears to be developing, and changes in social structure seem to be moving in the right direction, for "Society which once divided into something like a gigantic three-layer cake, now is broken up into a series of independent pyramids, each with its own interests, hierarchies, and rewards" (Lynes, 1953).

A "new" set of values may be visibly emerging. In this freehand sketch I have made no pretense of discerning a final common path, but I shall recapitulate in slightly different language the trends I think have been detected over the past generation:

1) Strictly personal values have receded in importance at the expense of more publicly standardized "group values," whether those of an organization, a community, a social class, a profession, a minority, or an interest group. "Conservatism" has increased. It is possible that the machine is coming to be taken as the implicit model for human behavior.

2) But there has been a concomitant rise in the "psychological values" related to mental health, the education and training of children, and the like. However, as DuBois (1955) puts it, "Self-cultivation in America has as its goal less the achievement of uniqueness and more the achievement of similarity."

3) The value placed upon "future success"[19] has receded in

[19]Cf. Friedmann (1956, page 6): "'Success,' rather than being achieved by unique actions in the presence of unique situations, has to be sought now by more clever and more pleasing performance of what is socially or institutionally expected. This emphasis on a generally accepted or acceptable form of behavior (and the corresponding de-emphasis on the substance of an action), the obedience to an almost Kantian imperative of universal pleasantness, is rewarded today by 'position' (historically corresponding to 'rank') in the scheme of institutions which have risen in connection with the growth of efficiency and social engineering and the proliferation of administrative and managerial tasks."

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favor of "respectable and stable security" seen in shorter time range.[20]

4) Aesthetic values have notably risen in the hierarchy.

5) The value of institutionalized religion is greater but primarily in terms of changes 1 and 3 above (need for group affiliation and stability) rather than in terms of intensified personal religious life.

6) "Heterogeneity" is becoming one of the organizing principles of the dominant American value system.

7) The ideal for American woman and her place in the society has altered as have our sexual codes.

8) There is an increased overt concern for abstract standards; greater value is placed upon explicit values.

IV. APPLICATIONS TO POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

I am going to say very little about "applications." I shall, however, permit myself a few "pessimistic" and "optimistic" remarks.

On the former side one must surely range the political apathy demonstrated by Stouffer, Jacob, and others for the vast majority, an unhappy conclusion not seriously challenged by any data – or even views – with which I am familiar. I believe we must also put the devaluation of the future and preoccupation with the present on this side. Those who are mainly concerned with enjoying the here and now while they can are not likely to expend the long-range effort or make the sacrifices necessary to build a strong United Nations or otherwise provide for stable world order.

On the positive side I would, on the whole, put the diminishing of tense and highly competitive striving in "the American character." If this continues into older age grades, some of the irritations Americans present to friends, neutrals, and enemies abroad should lessen. We may become more patient, less determined to transform much of world into a replica of ourselves,[21] less intrigued by the image of "the American century."

This grades into something which I am certain is positive: a greater tolerance of and even appreciation for diversity – manners

[20] As Berger (1957) points out: "For some years the Luce publications, chroniclers of business activity and guardians of business values, have been disturbed by the tendency of college seniors to prefer employment to enterprise."

[21] Riesman, however, suggests that we are increasingly stressing "mood engineering" – i.e., trying to persuade other nations to "like" us.

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and morals other than our own. Perhaps the view of a Catholic (Santayana) and a Protestant (Niebuhr) that the American people are not sufficiently mature to assume world leadership is based upon a value pattern that still dominates our elder leaders but may not dominate our future leaders. Possibly the eighteenth-century quality of optimism and defect of naïveté and the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century doctrines of "America first" and "the melting pot" will no longer prevail.

I am cheered by the fact that men who are better informed and who see more clearly than I (e.g., Bryson, 1952) have taken a long, close, and unflinching look at "the next America" and are undismayed – indeed, on balance, "optimistic."

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The American National Style

W. W. Rostow

PREFATORY NOTE

The problems considered by Messrs. Kaplan and Kennan – the clash between good and evil in man as a social animal, between theory and fact, and between order and innovation in human organization – are, of course, common in one form or another to all societies. How men cope with these among other problems as they go about their business reflects what is here called a national style. If the study of national character is an effort to establish a collective personality, the examination of national style seeks to define how that collective personality reacts to and acts upon its environment. The method of this paper is, then, to link the various themes by relating them, not to each other, but to the common style which they reflect.

The text is here developed in two unequal parts.[1] Part I treats what is here called the classic American style. This style, rooted in nonconformist Britain, emerged distinctively towards the end of the seventeenth century, as the imperatives and opportunities of a wild but ample land began to assert themselves over various initially transplanted autocratic attitudes and institutions which proved inappropriate to the colonial scene. In the eighteenth century, America could produce a Benjamin Franklin, a Thomas Jefferson, an Eli Whitney; and foreign travelers could begin their catalogue of American traits, many of which remain recognizable down to the present. In a sense, however, the classic American style comes fully to life only as the surge to the West begins in earnest, after the War of 1812, and the generation of founding fathers passes from the scene. What Part I tries to establish is the manner in which Americans came to deal with their problems in, roughly, the century after the Battle of New Orleans, or, if you like, in the period between Tocqueville and Turner.

Against the background of the latter day themes – considered by Messrs. Kluckhohn and Murray – Part II considers how the direc-

[1] In the unabridged version of this essay, the two parts are linked by a series of notes on historical cases illustrating the classic national style. [Editor]

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tion and character of change may have altered the classic national style in recent decades. It poses, finally, the question of how the national style as a whole and recent changes in it strengthen or weaken the society's ability to deal with certain major problems it confronts and is likely to confront over the foreseeable future.

I. THE CLASSIC AMERICAN STYLE

THE AMERICAN HOUSEHOLD

The classic American style is one way of coping with the inescapable dilemmas which are, universally, the substance of organized human life. Among the dilemmas which Americans, like others, have had to face are these: a consciousness of both good and evil in themselves and others; a compulsion to pursue individual advantage and a need to share the values and destiny of a larger community; an awareness of the uniqueness of particular circumstances and a compulsion to generalize; an inborn instinct for order and continuity in social organization and the requirement of change and innovation in order to survive.

In finding the balances and compromises necessary to live with these dilemmas men do not generally work out consistent institutions, values, or patterns of action. Neither individuals nor societies appear to be intrinsically well-integrated units. They somehow rock along, when they are viable, in patterns of apparently irrational balance.

In consequence, nations often appear to behave paradoxically when judged by arbitrary norms of consistency. In the case of the United States, for example, we often appear simultaneously as among the most idealistic and the most materialistic of peoples; we are given simultaneously to extreme empiricism in dealing with reality and to applying peculiarly spacious abstractions to particular circumstances; we pride ourselves on efficient administration, while our most effective performances have been *ad hoc,* convulsive responses to acute crises; we elevate the individual uniquely in our social life and values and in our politics as well, but we maintain bureaucratic structures which weigh heavily on him, a political system peculiarly suspicious of personal power, and a set of social conventions which appear to exact a high degree of conformity. The performance of other nations could be similarly evoked in terms of

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paradox.[2] But the content, not the paradox, is our concern here.

A national style – like the performance of a unique human personality – is likely to be the product of a variety of different elements rather than deducible from any one element or factor. W. H. Auden, in a review of a book by T. S. Eliot, once described Eliot not as a man but a household: a high church archdeacon, a wise and passionate old peasant grandmother, and a young boy given to slightly malicious practical jokes, all living, somehow, together.[3] The performance of nations is like that of individuals in that it combines discrete, fortuitous elements of heredity and environment, interacting, effectively coming to terms with problems (or failing to do so) in a recurrent fashion, building up over time relatively stable patterns of performance.

To understand the content of the American style we must, therefore, establish the nature of the American household; out of what basic elements did a distinctive American style emerge? Essentially, the classic American style emerged from the interaction of three powerful and persistent elements in the nation's experience: a nationalism and sense of community achieved by explicit commitment to particular ideal concepts of social and political organization; a day-to-day life challenged and dominated by the extraordinarily rich material potentials of the American scene; and a sequence of national life whose continuity and success appeared progressively to validate the initial commitments in the nation's culture and values, permitting innovation to take the form of a sequence of relatively minor, piecemeal adaptations of a stable basic structure. Let us turn, now, to an examination of these three basic components.

[2]For a recent exploration of the content of contemporary French paradoxes, see, by way of example, David Schoenbrun, "Manners and Morals of the French," *Harpers Magazine*, March 1957. "A Frenchman is rarely seen drunk in public or in private but France has the highest rate of alcoholism in the world. Frenchmen are fervent patriots but they invest their money abroad. A Frenchman is thrifty to the point of miserliness in his private family affairs but will cheerfully raid the public Treasury and laugh at constantly mounting national deficits. A Frenchman prides himself on his logic but turns off the heating system exactly on March 21, the first official day of spring, even though it may be snowing outside. A French deputy delivers fiery speeches in Parliament about the vital importance of putting down the rebellion in Algeria and then votes against the government's bill for increased taxes to pay the cost of putting down the Algerian revolt. All the French want is to be allowed to live in peace – yet France has been at war longer than any other country."

[3]*The New Yorker*, April 23, 1949.

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THE UNIFYING FUNCTION OF AMERICAN IDEALS

Many great nations have linked their nationality to a sense of mission which transcended their borders: in different ways and at different times the Chinese, Russians, Germans, British, French, and Spanish. The various concepts of national mission have generally been associated with pride in race, culture, cumulative national achievement, effective power, religion, and so on. For limited periods, the nationalism of several powers has been associated with a set of abstract ideas about how societies should be organized – for example, that of France and Russia in their post-revolutionary phases. American nationalism is special – in degree at least – because for almost two centuries, in both its domestic and external manifestations, it has been strongly colored by the ideal principles on which American independence was asserted and towards which American society was subsequently committed to aspire.

In certain of the colonies, the coming to America itself was associated with religious mission and, down to the present, American nationalism is suffused with a sense of higher sanction for the particular forms of social individualism, political democracy, and private enterprise which we have evolved. As Niebuhr has pointed out, the Calvinist and Deist traditions converged in this matter, permitting Americans to derive this higher sanction from either divine or natural law.[4] Our social rituals conventionally open with

[4] R. Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History* (New York: 1954), Chapter II, especially pages 23 and 24: "It is particularly remarkable that the two great religious-moral traditions which informed our early life – New England Calvinism and Virginian Deism and Jeffersonianism – arrive at remarkably similar conclusions about the meaning of our national character and destiny. Calvinism may have held too pessimistic views of human nature and too mechanical views of the providential ordering of human life. But when it assessed the significance of the American experiment, both its conceptions of American destiny and its appreciation of American virtue finally arrived at conclusions strikingly similar to those of Deism. Whether our nation interprets its spiritual heritage through Massachusetts or Virginia, we came into existence with the sense of being a 'separated' nation, which God was using to make a new beginning for mankind. We had renounced the evils of European feudalism. We had escaped from the evils of European religious bigotry. We had found broad spaces for the satisfaction of human desires in place of the crowded Europe. Whether, as in the case of the New England theocrats, our forefathers thought of our 'experiment' as primarily the creation of a new and purer church, or, as in the case of Jefferson and his coterie, they thought primarily of a new political community, they believed in either case that we had been called out by God to create a new humanity. We were God's 'American Israel.'"

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a prayer followed by the salute to the flag, and we have elevated the Plymouth colony, with its special sense of pilgrimage, to a place in our folklore quite disproportionate to its objective role in the making of New England and, ultimately, the nation.[5] The concept of the American nation retains, for Americans and others everywhere, a dimension of ideological experiment and leadership.

The "liberty and justice for all" towards which we were committed to aspire took on a special importance and power within the American continental community. These ideal national goals have been the essential device for unifying a society otherwise fragmented by acute individualism, regionalism, and race. We have lacked the cement of hierarchical political and social institutions, a long history, a common race, or even a common religion. But we fashioned national unity out of a mixture of seventeenth-century Protestant values, the dreams of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, and the cumulative experiences and myths we built upon them.

The commitment to govern by methods which left maximum individual freedom and to organize social life on the principle of equality of opportunity have not only given content to American nationhood but, perhaps more important, they have served at all levels as the essential solvent, the source of compromise, the common meeting place in a society otherwise dedicated to the proposition that its affairs should be conducted by vigorous conflict and competition among individual, group, and regional interests.[6] The vagueness of conventional articulation of the national ideals has, in itself,

[5] S. E. Morison, *By Land and by Sea* (New York: 1953), Chapter X.

[6] The cast of this essay is designed to dramatize the role in the American experience of certain unifying concepts and institutions. Its themes should not obscure the equally fundamental fact that, within the framework of consensus, implicit or explicit, conflict and debate have been the engine which has driven us forward – a fact forcefully emphasized by A. M. Schlesinger, Jr., in a criticism of this essay's final draft.

In this connection, Charles Curtis has recently written: "I suggest that things get done gradually only between opposing forces. There is no such thing as self-restraint in a people. What looks like it is indecision. . . . It may be that truth is best sought in the market of free speech, but the best decisions are neither bought nor sold. They are the result of disagreement, where the last word is not 'I admit you're right,' but 'I've got to live with the son of a bitch, haven't I?'" (*A Commonplace Book* [New York: 1957], pages 112 and 113.)

The present analysis would, of course, accept the fact that the nation's consensus has been the product of clash and debate; but it is designed also to establish why Americans have chosen, in the end, to live with one another – a result by no means foreordained in all societies and, in itself, a matter of substance.

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served the important function of permitting a maximum sense of association with the national ethos by groups whose more immediate interests and, even, whose cultures widely diverged. Historically, our values, like our political institutions, have been federalized; and, in the midst of the diversity of the continent, the narrow but exalted area of national consensus mattered greatly. From the addresses of the President to the after-dinner speech of the most narrowly focused special interest group, the articulation of the society's common values and an evocation of the drama of successful American growth within their orbit play a role which in older societies is covered by the rituals of ancient legitimized tradition.

The role of shared values and of participation in the special adventure of America has, thus, been more than a substitute for a conventional patriotism. It has played a local and intimate role as well. Americans, living with the heavy weight placed on the individual by Protestant theology, in a society denied (like most other Protestant societies) the cushioning effects of a medieval heritage, have had to fashion alternative ways of mitigating the burdens of isolation and personally answerable responsibility. There is some truth in D. H. Lawrence's designation of American democracy as a negative creed: "Henceforth be masterless."[7] Some truth, but not the whole truth; for men are lonely and need connections beyond themselves. American individualism has meant, in a sense, merely that we have created a different structure of "masters" than the clans and the hierarchies, the clearly defined social rituals, the comforting familiar traditions of the Old World. Among our "masters" are a narrower but, perhaps, more intense family; a tendency overtly to conform to the will and manners of the political and social majority; a written Constitution elevated to a peculiar sanctity; a nationalism associated with an ambiguous but, in the end, meaningful idealism; a marvelously complex array of voluntary associations, built on the tradition of cooperation and compromise among like-minded equals, a variant of the English concept of liberty. And, as Tocqueville perceived, the heroic image of the nation's adventure, and an identification with it, was a peculiarly important instrument for unifying a society of detached individuals:[8]

[7] *Studies in Classic American Literature* (New York: Anchor edition, 1955), page 18.

[8] *Democracy in America*, ed. P. Bradley (New York: Vintage edition, 1954), Volume II, pages 78 and 79.

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I readily admit that the Americans have no poets; I cannot allow that they have no poetic ideas. In Europe people talk a great deal of the wilds of America, but the Americans themselves never think about them; they are insensible to the wonders of inanimate nature and they may be said not to perceive the mighty forests that surround them till they fall beneath the hatchet. Their eyes are fixed upon another sight: the American people views its own march across these wilds, draining swamps, turning the course of rivers, peopling solitudes, and subduing nature. This magnificent image of themselves does not meet the gaze of the Americans at intervals only; it may be said to haunt every one of them in his least as well as his most important actions and to be always flitting before his mind.

Virtually all cultures create ideals of behavior to which the individual cannot fully or regularly conform. There is nothing unique about the commitment of the American to values which he must, to a degree, violate in order to live in the world as it is. In most societies, however, the political and social life of the community – and its diplomacy – are not so directly tied to explicit moral purposes. Despite the early defeat of theocracy in New England and the lack of an established national church, there remains a sense in which we have continued to identify church and state. This identification of nationhood with a commitment to strive for good purposes accounts for the "moral overstrain"[9] which, Myrdal noted, remains a peculiarly powerful engine within American society. It had led a less friendly foreign observer to conclude:[10]

Americanism is not merely a myth that clever propaganda stuffs into people's heads, but something every American continually reinvents in his gropings. It is at one and the same time a great external reality rising up at the entrance to the port of New York across from the Statue of Liberty, and the daily product of anxious liberties.

THE OPERATOR'S WAY WITH IDEAS

Counterpoised against the society's active commitment to great ideal goals was the character of American life in the classic period: a life of hard, absorbing, material pursuits, executed on the basis of individual initiative, conducted to individual advantage.

The nation has been extremely rich in land and other natural

[9] G. Myrdal, *An American Dilemma* (New York: 1944), Volume I, page 21.

[10] Jean-Paul Sartre, "Americans and Their Myths," *The Nation*, Volume 165, October 18, 1947, pages 402 and 403; quoted in K. Davis, H. Bredemeir, M. Levy, *Modern American Society* (New York: 1949), page 48.

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resources in relation to its population. It was enormous in scale relative to means of communication over the nation's formative period. It presented for more than two and one-half centuries the challenge and possibility of an open frontier; and, for a full three centuries, the American environment made economically attractive to Americans as well as foreigners a virtually unobstructed flow of immigration. In this setting, individual effort and competence yielded high returns in economic welfare, whose attainment and expansion drew off the bulk of the society's talent and energies.

The attraction of economic life was, however, negative as well as positive. In the classic century – and notably after the Civil War – the society's internal structure and relations to the outside world were such that positions in neither church nor state represented roles of great national prestige and authority, let alone affluence. Men came to seek in the adventure of the American economy – in the test of the market – not only material advantage, but also the sense of power, achievement, and status elsewhere granted by a less monolithic, more heterogeneous scale of values.

In addition, the mobility of American life, the lack of stable connection with family and place, heightened the attraction and psychological importance of individual achievement. And the divorce of the individual from a sense of direct connection with a stable, structured community was further increased by the flow of immigrants. The problems and pace of adjustment varied, of course, with each wave, source, and social class of immigration, as well as with the region and community within which the immigrant settled. Despite great variation, however, between the hungry forties and the First World War each wave of immigration faced a pattern of adjustment to the prevalent values and culture of the nation which was, by and large, accomplished by generational stages. In this process of adjustment, the demonstration by the individual of effective performance in economic and political markets played a substantial role. The man who could solve palpably urgent material problems, organize and operate profitably a productive enterprise, deal effectively with the day-to-day compromises and accommodations of local social and political life thus rose in status; his operational cast of mind came to dominate the American scene – a cast of mind biased towards the assessment by individuals of concrete, particular problems, empirical in method, pragmatic in solutions.

But men have a need and instinct to generalize their experience,

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to organize, somehow, the chaos around them; and when Americans, busy with limited practical chores, building a new continental society, reached out for larger abstractions, they tended to balloon out concepts derived from personal, practical experience. They generalized what they intimately knew. Tocqueville described vividly how it came about that a nation of individualistic empiricists were powerfully drawn to a particular use of highly abstract concepts: [11]

> The Americans are much more addicted to the use of general ideas than the English and entertain a much greater relish for them.... He who inhabits a democratic country sees around him on every hand men differing but little from one another; he cannot turn his mind to any one portion of mankind without expanding and dilating his thought till it embraces the whole. All the truths that are applicable to himself appear to him equally and similarly applicable to each of his fellow citizens and fellow men. Having contracted the habit of generalizing his ideas in the study which engages him most and interests him most, he transfers the same habit to all his pursuits; and thus it is that the craving to discover general laws in everything, to include a great number of objects under the same formula, and to explain a mass of facts by a single cause becomes an ardent and sometimes an undiscerning passion in the human mind.... When I repudiate the traditions of rank, professions, and birth, when I escape from the authority of example to seek out, by the single effort of my reason, the path to be followed, I am inclined to derive the motives of my opinions from human nature itself, and this leads me necessarily, and almost unconsciously, to adopt a great number of very general notions. ... Men who live in ages of equality have a great deal of curiosity and little leisure; their life is so practical, so confused, so excited, so active, that but little time remains to them for thought. Such men are prone to general ideas because they are thereby spared the trouble of studying particulars; they contain, if I may so speak, a great deal in a little compass, and give, in a little time, a great return. If, then, on a brief and inattentive investigation, they think they discern a common relation between certain objects, inquiry is not pushed any further; and without examining in detail how far these several objects agree or differ, they are hastily arranged under one formula, in order to pass to another subject.

The American mind, devoted to arduous practical tasks, also became equipped with an arsenal of general concepts – often legitimate but partial insights – not rigorously related to each other or to the bodies of fact they were meant to illuminate.

On balance, there was little in American life – its content and its values – that encouraged the care and contemplation required to array the intermediate structure of abstractions, test them for

[11] *Op. cit.*, Volume II, pages 15 and 18.

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internal consistency, and to make orderly patterns of thought. Regions, towns, and families did, it is true, exhibit something of the Buddenbrooks dynamics; that is, a third generation (symbolically or in fact) born to both money and social status, turning to the life of the mind. But these enclaves of reflective leisure could not hold up for long against the vortex of American life. Even in the older, more stable sections of the East Coast, the proportion of first-rate talent that could be drawn and held in intellectual pursuits – as against the claims of business and finance, railroads and the West, shipping or the law – remained small, down to and beyond the First World War.

The national style reinforced itself, moreover, by coming to suffuse the widening process of public education. The principle of free public education was fought through in the North during the pre-Civil War decades; and the new elementary schools reflected a bias towards practical, usable thought, as did the high schools which carried the educational revolution forward from about 1870. In a sense, the gospel of education for explicitly practical purposes had been written into national law by the Morrill Act which, in itself, set in motion a self-reinforcing process in the land grant colleges. Towards the end of the classic period, when the nation produced in Dewey a philosopher of education who challenged the *status quo*, his challenge was not to the gospel of teaching practical things, but to how they were taught and to the cost of existing methods for the individual personality.

When American institutions of higher learning moved towards maturity at the close of the nineteenth century, the architects of the new graduate schools were instinctively drawn to German university models. The Germans, who had left an imprint on American education earlier in the century, placed a high premium on facts and their ordering by precise rules of evidence. Their concept of professional hard-working scholarship harmonized with the instincts of a nation of empiricists entering into an age of industrialism and specialization. The nineteenth-century Germans, when they came to generalize in the social sciences were, like Americans, prone to broad concepts, only loosely linked to the bodies of fact they so painstakingly compiled. On the whole, Americans pulled up short of the cosmic level of German abstractions, mainly steering clear of universal systems; but a family resemblance remains. We have continued, in a substantial part of

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the nation's intellectual life, "to explain a mass of facts by a single cause."

American education and intellectual life generally have altered radically in the past several decades. Nevertheless, the dominant, if changing, mode of advanced education is a specialized empiricism, whose fragmented results are bound into unity, if at all, by vague high-order generalizations. In the classic period, American intellectual and scientific life produced many knowledgeable men; a number of creative insights; and, at its best, figures of wisdom, with great sensibility about the nature of the physical world or about how human life is really conducted. But it yielded few general theoretical structures of distinction.

In both its dimensions – a devotion to the ordering of fact in terms of low-order abstraction and a certain vague disorder at high levels of abstraction – the classic American intellectual style has reflected the operator's biases and fitted his needs. Committed to do the best he can in terms of goals defined by the concrete task he has undertaken or the institutions of which he is a part, the operator desires to know in detail his field of action but wishes to be as eclectic as he need be and as unhampered as possible by considerations outside those implicit in his operations.

The classic American manner of dealing with ideas in relation to reality is by no means unique, but it is distinctive. We are, evidently, a part of the Western European intellectual and philosophical tradition. But cut loose from the surviving medieval traditions and institutions of Western Europe, devoted overwhelmingly to building a rich modern society out of an empty continent, we developed an empiricism more acute and energetic than that of our contemporaries.

CONTINUITY, SUCCESS, AND THE AD HOC FORMULA

How was the gap bridged between a heightened reliance on idealism to define and maintain a sense of nation and community, and a heightened reliance on the vigorous interplay of individual, regional, and group interests to do the day's work? How was the gap bridged between a concentration of effort on particular chores, perceived in terms of low-order abstractions, and the rich but somewhat disorderly kit-bag of higher abstractions into which Americans reached for their general organizing principles? The answer appears to be that Americans built their style around the task of

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solving problems. They were content to leave implicit the moral and philosophic ambiguities which flowed from the method of compromise and experiment. Relatively little attention in formal thought or articulation was given to the common-law formulae which emerged from these living processes because of two massive facts: the first is the extraordinary continuity of the American experience over the classic period, a continuity which persists in many domains down to the present; the second, that as a national society the United States was a distinct success. Men are more inclined to examine with intellectual refinement a complex system of which they are a part, which is confronted with radically new problems or which is failing, than a going concern. And when, towards the close of the classic century, some Americans became more reflective and articulate about their society, they tended to elevate "life, experience, process, growth, context, function" over "logic, abstraction, deduction, mathematics, and mechanics."[12] Holmes' dictum embraced more of the national style than the law: "The life of the law has not been logic: it has been experience."

The continuity and success of the national experience had a number of distinct dimensions which converged to produce the result. First, of course, was the frontier. From the earliest stages of the Massachusetts and Virginia colonies down to the twentieth century – that is, for almost three centuries – the existence of an accessible and productive frontier gave a special reality to the individualistic values of the society, strongly coloring its institutions, from the family to politics, and its culture. The frontier was a long historical process, not a piece of real estate; and American economic, political, and social life consisted in good part of the interplay and balancing of interests between the frontier areas and the more stable communities and institutions that moved in behind the frontier. Certain political patterns (for example, the conflict of interest between soft-money, indebted farmers and hard-money, urban property owners; between those who wanted the state to build public improvements and those who looked to lower taxes) are continuous from one end of American history to the other; and Americans became expert at working with them, in their many variants. More than that, the concept of the frontier, its existence somewhere to the West, imparted a continuing sense of promise, possibility, and adventure to those who lived their lives out in more ordered eastern settings.

[12] Morton White, *Social Thought in America* (Boston: 1957), pages 12 and 13.

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Despite the expanding frontier, however, the task of maintaining unity was, in one sense, eased as time went on. The scale of the nation was roughly matched and then outmatched by the development of communications capable of binding the regions together and giving them unity. In terms of the central problem of achieving and maintaining nationhood among a group of regions with powerful distinctive interests and attitudes, the working techniques of federalism proved essentially viable with only incremental modification.

Similarly, the initial *tour de force* of generating effective (even if barely effective) national action from a dispersed and locally oriented population – in the 1770's and 1780's – has been somehow maintained despite the increase and physical spread of the population, the impact of diverse immigrations, and the emergence or sharpening of class groupings as industrialization and urbanization proceeded. The attachment of American nationalism to certain overriding principles of social and political organization has served adequately as a rallying point for nationhood, surviving the brutal test of civil war. The structure of private social groupings has continued to ramify and to weave a highly individualistic and mobile population into a firm social fabric; for these groupings have come to share a widening area of common values. Above all, the canny insights of the founding fathers yielded a constitutional structure which, when supplemented by the intermediation of a two-party system, a Supreme Court, and an Anglo-American system of law, has weathered the gross changes in the scale and character of American society.

The maintenance of national unity was eased, of course, by the degree of vertical mobility American society continued to offer. Although social mobility in an urban, industrial setting is a quite different phenomenon from social mobility in a setting where it consists mainly in the possibility of acquiring cheaply an agricultural homestead, Americans have made the transition from one to the other without ceasing to envisage as possible for themselves – and especially for their children – a marked rise in social and economic status on the basis of individual capabilities and performance. The nation's evolution steadily confirmed and re-confirmed the central unifying concept of equality of opportunity in a sufficiently meaningful way to maintain loyalty to the nation's social system.

The adjustment to conflicting regional and group interests within our national society, and the process of social mobility have been

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enormously aided by the sustained growth and high output per head which has marked the history of the modern American economy. This not only gave reality to the concept of progress, but also permitted men to achieve compromises in which they shared the increments to communal wealth without the bitter, corrosive conflicts which come about when men feel they can rise only at the expense of someone else's decline. (In one sense, it was precisely because the land to the West was not congenial to cotton culture and could no longer be divided evenly between slave and free states that the Civil War ensued: the South did, indeed, feel that the nation's extension to the West Coast could only be at the expense of decline or loss of its way of life. In that sense, the great exception reinforces the general rule.)

Above all, the cast of American values and institutions and the tendency to adapt them by cumulative experiment rather than to change them radically has been progressively strengthened by the image of the gathering success of the American adventure, whether it was judged on economic grounds, on grounds of political workability, or in terms, even, of international status. The nation, founded in defiance of a major power, living for a time at bay in both a military and a political sense, came early in its history to feel that its initial concept of a transcendent ideological destiny was justified by the turn of events in the world outside. Until well into the twentieth century there were grounds for believing that the American pattern was, indeed, the wave of the future; and, although somewhat chastened by the experience of recent decades, Americans have by no means wholly lost a sense of mission, based on confidence and pride in the success of a unique moral, political, economic, and social experiment.

We can now sum up briefly. The moral problem posed for Americans has been solved by an incessant process of compromised conflict and evolutionary adaptation taking place within a continuous framework of institutions, hammered out of a colonial life and a revolution rooted in inherited British values. The philosophical problem posed for Americans has been solved by a dedication to the vigorous extension of economic, political, and social processes. With certain notable exceptions, the accidents of history and the American environment made it possible for these processes of extension to be conducted by incremental modification, arrived

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at by widespread experiment, after vehement debate. The whole cacophony of American articulation about politics, social values, economics, and ethics has had a real importance in keeping alive the nation's unifying values; but more significant for how the nation actually worked have been the subtly balanced concepts left implicit in the working processes of a society blessed, for most of its life, by the possibility of solving its essential problems in relative continuity with its past experience. American ideals have a living place within these working processes, but a place more compromised and less innocent than our conventional modes of articulation would allow.

But the intellectual content of a process is immensely complex. It involves many factors, interacting over time. The normal forms of rigorous logical exposition can grip only elements within the process and are likely to give them a more rigid and static cast than, in fact, they have: the number of unknowns is likely to be greater than the number of equations that can usefully be formulated. Men successfully operate processes by accumulating experience, feel, judgment – by sensing recurrent patterns rather than isolating clean-cut logical connections of cause and effect. This is how good captains of sailing vessels have worked, good politicians, good businessmen. This has been the typical American style in operating and developing the nation's society.

Its success, however, is dependent on two conditions which are, to a degree, alternatives. First, the problems confronted must be, in their essence, relatively familiar, capable of solution by only moderately radical innovation, on the basis of existing principles or institutions. Second, there must be sufficient time for the experimental exploration of possible solutions and the osmotic process of accepting change. The more the time permitted, the greater the workability of a technique of problem-solving by empirical experiment.

It is, therefore, in the less radical orders of innovation – in science, industry, and politics – that the nation has excelled. Or, put another way, the American style is least effective when it confronts issues which require radical innovation, promptly.

The great vigor and relative success with which American society has thus far overcome crises should not conceal the fact that many of those crises represent failures in the workings of the society. But it is of the nature of crisis that action can no longer be post-

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poned; and, in addition, crises transcend in their implications the immediate issues in contention and threaten more basic values and institutions. In the American case, the basic values and institutions of the nation have, by and large, commanded the support of a substantial majority. The crisis thus becomes a concrete operational problem to whose immediate resolution a unified nation turns. And the need for action – and, in the American case, its success – often permits the underlying causes for the crisis to persist, unexamined and obscure.

In short, a gift for vigorous communal action in the face of crisis – invaluable as it is – should not be confused with a talent for prompt and radical innovation in the face of new circumstances. This is the essence of the danger which confronts contemporary America, notably in its military and political relations with the world, where the pace of technological change and of revolutionary political transformation may give us neither the continuity of experience nor the time the classic American style inherently requires for success. Resolution of our current problems by the technique of crisis action may yield misdirected efforts or action undertaken too late to ensure the society's interests.

II. RECENT CHANGES AND SOME CURRENT PROBLEMS

INTRODUCTION

This second part of the paper seeks to define and to illustrate the extent to which recent changes in American society have tended to alter the classic national style. The contemporary institutions and texture of American life reflect both the dynamics of American development as a domestic society and the forces impinging on us from a sustained involvement on the world scene since about 1940. An initial effort is made, therefore, to array the two sets of factors which sometimes converge, sometimes diverge in their consequences. Against the background of this array, the paper returns to the elements in the national household isolated in Part I and considers the changing function of American idealism, the choices newly opened up or denied by contemporary American society, and the adequacy of the contemporary operating style to solve the problems the nation confronts.

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CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE SETTING OF AMERICAN DOMESTIC SOCIETY

The physical and institutional environment of American life has, of course, altered radically in the last fifty years and has been subject to rapid change in the postwar decade. Most recent developments, however, have a considerable history. Change has not been continuous, as, indeed, it could not be in a half-century which included two world wars and a unique world depression. Nevertheless, six major, persistent trends can be identified as operating since the beginning of the century which may now have achieved such scale as to require some redefinition of the context within which American citizens live and make their value choices.

1. Urbanization and Suburbanization

In 1900, 40 per cent of the American population was classified as urban, in 1950, 56 per cent. In 1910, of those living in metropolitan areas, 23 per cent were located in satellite districts; thirty years later the figure had moved forward modestly to 32 per cent; in the next decade, however, suburbia expanded to embrace about 42 per cent of the population of metropolitan districts. And this was, evidently, not the end of the matter.

The average American is, then, increasingly a resident of a satellite district within a metropolitan area. More than that, radical improvements in means of communication and transport have tended to break down the isolation of rural and small town life, extending the suburban character of the nation.

2. Bureaucratization

The proportion of the total working force employed within large-scale units has increased. So far as the economy as a whole is concerned, this phenomenon turns out to be a consequence mainly of the shift of labor out of agriculture rather than of any marked tendency towards increased concentration in American business. Since 1929, the proportion of agricultural to non-agricultural employment has fallen from more than 25 per cent to less than 10 per cent.

So far as industry is concerned, such comparable statistics as are available indicate that the proportion of wage earners in the largest 5 per cent of manufacturing establishments has risen modestly: from 55 per cent in 1914 to 62 per cent in 1947. But the trend in manu-

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facturing does not apply to business as a whole because of the vitality of small business units in other sectors, notably retail trade and services, where the proportion of the total working force engaged had increased. The independence of these small units is, however, often compromised by their links to great corporate units; e.g., automobile dealers.

Government, of course, has greatly expanded. The Civil Service rolls of the Federal government have risen from about 600,000 in 1930 to about 2,400,000 in 1955; and the armed forces remain mobilized at something like ten times their level of the 1930's. Cumulatively, about 20 million American men have known the round of military life.

By and large, then, the experience of life and work within a large-scale organization is increasingly typical of American society; and the white collar experience of the office increasingly more typical than factory or farm.

3. The Increase and Stability of Real Income

The Second World War and the postwar years have seen about fifteen years of full employment and more or less regular growth in output per head. Mainly because the United States entered the Second World War with heavy unemployment, the nation was able to conduct not merely a major war effort but also to sustain or even slightly to increase real income per head. Since 1945, the rise in income per head has continued. Between 1948 and 1954, for example, the proportion of American families with incomes over $5000 (at 1948 prices) rose from 21 per cent to 30 per cent. This upward shift in welfare was accompanied by institutional and political changes which appeared increasingly to guarantee that a major depression would not recur without effective compensatory action by the government. Under these circumstances, the nation resumed in the postwar years trends already strong in the 1920's; that is, to allocate increases in real income to improved housing, and, in general, to expand the proportion of consumption outlays on durable consumer goods, financed increasingly by means of consumers' credit.

4. The Acceptance of the Welfare State

The alterations in the role of government in relation to the nation's industrial economy, begun with the Progressive movement more

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than a half-century ago, have now yielded a consensus among a substantial majority of the population that the government should continue to perform a wide range of economic functions. These functions are designed to guarantee equality of opportunity and economic security, and to provide important margins of social overhead capital for the society. If these commitments in principle are maintained for the rapidly expanding and migrating American population, the prospect is that the role of government will expand rather than contract over (say) the next several decades. This expansion will be required to build roads and schools, to restructure the centers of old cities, and to meet enlarged commitments to social security, the aged, and to public health. The process of balancing the requirements of a society committed both to private capitalism and to other elements in the individualist-utilitarian creed has thus produced, as a permanent feature, an enlargement in the scale and functions of both federal and state governments; it has raised a whole range of unresolved problems for public finance and fiscal policy, and made more acute, as well, the problem of avoiding chronic inflation in a democratic society committed to relatively full employment.

5. The Rising Intellectual Level

The dynamics of the national commitment to popular education extended rapidly towards the end of the nineteenth century into secondary and higher education. Its broad consequence can be seen in the relative educational status of enlisted men in the First and Second World Wars.

	Percentage in	
Years of Schooling	*World War I*	*World War II*
Total	100.0	100.0
Grade School	76.7	30.9
High School		
4 Years	4.1	23.3
3 Years	2.7	11.2
2 Years	4.8	10.9
1 Year	6.3	7.8
College		
4 Years	1.2	3.6
3 Years	0.9	2.0
2 Years	1.5	4.0
1 Year	1.8	6.3

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Veterans' benefits and the high level of postwar incomes have carried this process forward with wide-ranging consequences covering the whole realm of public taste, opinion, and manners.

There has been a parallel maturing of American intellectual life marked, for example, by a sharp increase in the American contribution to theoretical concepts in both the physical and the social sciences. This trend towards virtuosity in theory was certainly accelerated by the intellectual immigration from the European continent of the 1930's and probably, even, by the instrusion on American academic life of certain war and postwar problems where theory and theorists proved useful and effective. But the development appears to have been implicit in the aspirations and intellectual values of the generation of American scientists which came of age between the wars and which reacted along a broad front against the extreme empirical bias of its elders.

6. Increased Social Homogeneity

In the pre-1914 years, immigration to the United States was running at the rate of about one million per year. It fell away in the 1920's and became a thin trickle in the 1930's. The process of adjustment to the predominant values of American life and culture has steadily proceeded, generation by generation; and it has broken down or strongly diluted those groupings in American life based on racial or national origin, who lived for a time predominantly within non-American cultures. To this process has been added the industrial revolution in the South of the past two decades, which is, again, producing changes in the direction of national uniformity, as is the general acceleration in physical mobility since 1941. There has, thus, been a marked increase in the social homogeneity of the American population. This broad trend, however, leaves the problem of the social status of the Negro in a special category, felt with a special acuteness, perhaps, as other minority problems have become less sharp; as the average economic and educational level of the Negro has risen, and with it his level of aspiration; and as the nation's position in the world arena makes it newly self-conscious of the residues of the "peculiar institution."

Abstracting, then, from the Second World War and the international involvements of the post-1945 years, American society appears to have found a distinctive moving equilibrium in which certain of the old processes – notably the open frontier and a large

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flow of immigration – have been supplanted by the dynamics of an industrial growth oriented increasingly to durable consumer goods and the migration to the suburbs. Having gradually thrashed out a resolution which narrowed the conflicts between industrial private capitalism and the other values of political and social democracy, Americans have found themselves in the mid-1950's a suburbanizing nation, increasingly at work in large bureaucracies, with a new security of employment, rising levels of welfare, rising standards of education and intellectual sophistication, and an increased social and political homogeneity.

This setting – at once different, more restricted, and less inhibited than the past – has posed new value choices for Americans in ordering their lives; but the setting of contemporary American life is a product not merely of the working out of parameters implicit in the sweep of our domestic history but of their interplay with forces arising from our protracted engagement in the world arena of power since 1941.

THE IMPACT OF WORLD POWER STATUS

For the better part of the past two decades, the United States has been steadily caught up in world affairs on a scale never before known in our history. Although the Second World War was the largest and most prolonged of the nation's external military ventures, it is the twelve years of post-1945 involvement which are, probably, more significant for the contours of our society. Thus, both prosperity and power lead to the same question: To what extent have the components of the classic national style been altered by this interweaving of welfare and garrison states?

Is American nationalism still rooted in some form of meaningful attachment to the old set of individualistic values and ideals? Is the round of day-to-day life – and the choices made by Americans among the alternatives open to them – still dominated by the rich material potentials of the environment? Are the problems which the nation confronts still susceptible of solution by piecemeal compromise or adaptation, by slow-moving processes involving only modest innovation at each stage? To what extent has the national style altered to permit more prompt and radical innovation where such is required?

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THE CONTEMPORARY ROLE OF THE CLASSIC AMERICAN IDEALISM

It is clear that the national commitment to its traditional ideals has, in some meaningful sense, persisted; but the contemporary setting of American society has altered significantly the areas where these ideals have been forced to contest against other interests and motives. The wholesome burden of dilemma imposed by a communal commitment to ideals has not been lifted; but the content of our major moral dilemmas has changed. In general, the value dilemmas arising from domestic life have become less sharp and have shifted somewhat in character; but they have been superseded by two major dilemmas arising from our status as a world power in a period of protracted tension.

The great debate over the appropriate balance between the interests of private property and the interests of the private citizen has by no means ended. The heirs of Cotton Mather, Hamilton, McKinley, and Coolidge can still be detected as well as the heirs of Roger Williams, Jefferson, Jackson, Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt. Nevertheless, the challenge to our national life by the clashing imperatives of the individualist-utilitarian creed has diminished.

What believer in the classic virtues of private capitalism can take comfort from the well-behaved committees of professional administrators who now run our major business firms on behalf of the insurance companies and the other agglomerations of small savings which, increasingly, own them? What believer in the cause of the underdog can identify himself with the problems of Dave Beck or, even, of that professional administrator, David J. McDonald? There are still issues which can make the old firehorses paw the ground: on the one hand, a $72 billion budget; on the other, Hell's Canyon or Dixon-Yates. And there will certainly be others. But the great affairs of domestic policy – education, health, water supply, the rebuilding of the cities, the control of inflation, the provision of adequate social overhead capital for a bulging population – are, in a curious way, community rather than special interest or regional issues, evoking somewhat different alignments than those we have lived with since the Civil War. Segregation is, in one sense, a special case – a stage in a long, slow, familiar, on-going process. But its solution, like the solution to the other major domestic issues, requires an extraordinary concert

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of effort by the majority in each community, an effort which could not be conceived of as realistic until quite recent times.

On the other hand, the society is confronted with the clash between the interests of national security in a period of acute danger and the values of individual freedom. This is not a new issue for Americans, who have survived the Alien and Sedition Acts, the Palmer raids, the treatment of Japanese-Americans in the Second World War. At all stages in our history, individual freedom faced limits set by the common interest; indeed, the Constitution, in its essence, acknowledges and seeks to compromise the inevitable conflict. But our recent experience is unique because it is the most protracted passage of national crisis we have ever faced. The McCarthy phase was, evidently, its most extreme expression, when for the better part of four years a number of forces converged to permit McCarthy to throw the nation off its natural political balance. And the problem has continuing, if less flagrant, ramifications which distort the society away from the traditional norms of an open society at peace; e.g., a national budget regularly more than 15 per cent of gross national product, the draft, substantial areas of secrecy in scientific research, the reinforcement of the (apparently) instinctive conservatism of contemporary under-graduates by the desire to protect future job opportunities, and so on.

At first glance one might conclude that the increasing homogeneity of the society as well as the experience of protracted national tension have yielded a more conventional national patriotism than we have known before; and in a number of directions this kind of nationalism – which was hitherto associated with short periods of intense military engagement – has, indeed, clashed with the concept of the nation as the repository of certain fundamental values which transcend nationhood. But the sense of dedication to some version of these transcendent values has by no means disappeared. It would be quite incorrect to conclude that, under the strain of Cold War, the American community had abandoned the old link between nationhood and ideal values. Virtually without exception, Americans feel impelled, in the end, to justify their positions by an identification of the national interest with some version of these old values – be it in a McCarthyite crusade against materialistic communism, a Humphreyite[18] effort to protect the

[18] The reference is, of course, to a former Secretary of the Treasury rather than to the incumbent Senator from Minnesota.

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United States as an effectively functioning capitalist island, or a Trumanite effort to build and sustain a viable coalition not merely capable of holding the military balance of power, but also reflecting in some meaningful sense the notion of a Free World. More than that, the effort to find formulae which reconciled the exigencies of Cold War with the traditional values of a democratic society has been pursued with increasing vigor, as the character of the problem came to define itself, and the diffused but powerful institutions of a free society came to grips with one specific consequence or another of the clash between security and individual freedom.

In short, American law, politics, intellectual life, industry, and the government bureaucracies have been affected by the conflict between the instinctive values and habits of an open society and the inescapable problems of survival in the face of potentially mortal challenge. Where full reconciliation has proved impossible, the older individualistic values have, to a degree, given way to overriding communal values, sometimes in acts of fear and confusion which saw the nation at its worst; but, as time and the national gifts for process have operated, the area of loss – where it was not irretrievable in human and institutional terms – was diminished. It is not the task of this paper to measure the extent of the loss or to judge whether or to what degree it was inevitable. This argument would simply assert that the nation became seized of a new major problem involving its basic value commitments; and its performance in the face of it reflected the continued active presence of the old values in the working processes of the society.

The greatest of the problems posed for the nation's traditional identification with a set of explicit ideals has been in fashioning a military and foreign policy abroad capable of dealing with the threat posed by modern communism. Here, on a world basis, the nation has faced something like the problem it once confronted during the Civil War. Communism (like slavery in the South) has posed two distinct but related threats to the nation's interest: a direct threat to the national military security, and an ideological threat with implications for both the nation's military security and for its survival as an open society. The balance of power in Eurasia could be lost to the United States by the movement of Soviet or Chinese Communist ground forces. And, equally, it could be lost if, in hope or despair, men and women in the decisive regions of

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Eurasia should turn to communism – or, in apathy, let the Communists take over – as a believed solution to problems which could not be solved within the orbit of the democratic process and the alliances of the non-Communist world. Further, quite apart from the military threat of Communist victory in Eurasia, the survival of the United States as a free society, under conditions of mid-twentieth century communications, would be in jeopardy if we were to become a democratic island in a totalitarian sea.

The conduct of American military and foreign policy has, thus, required related but distinctive courses of action designed both to deter Communist military strength and to defeat its challenge as an ideology. The task has been complicated because the techniques and attitudes of mind necessary to deal with the threat of military aggression did not neatly converge; indeed, they have often clashed with those necessary to deal with the ideological threat of communism. We have had no Lincoln to pose the problem of balance and relationship clearly. We have, nevertheless, sought a balance, but have had chronic difficulties in articulating it in words or in action, right down to the awkwardness of the two (fundamentally legitimate) strands in the Eisenhower Doctrine.

In general, when Americans could, in a single act, move in conformity both to patent national interest and to familiar ideological principles the nation has been effective; for example, in European policy over the period 1947-1952, embracing the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and the early buildup of NATO; also, in the early stages of the Korean War where there was a convergence of military interest and more abstract loyalty to collective security and the United Nations.

Where our interests, as we saw them, clashed with our ideal values we had difficulty. It is evident that we were inhibited from moving effectively against Viet Minh in 1953-1954 by (among other factors) a reluctance to risk American lives in a cause tainted with colonialism. Obversely, where our ideological instincts could only be satisfied at excessive cost or risk – as in the liberation of Communist China, Korea, or Eastern Europe – we adopted awkward postures and ineffective policies.

In general the character of the Cold War, as decreed by Communist strategy and method, has denied us the opportunity to react to national threat in the style with which we were most comfortable, that is, a clean and total switch from peace to a war which

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could be fought with the widespread conviction that both our interests and our ideals were at stake. We have been forbidden a convulsive once-and-for-all resolution, for the nature of modern weapons and the strength of the enemy, in the end, eliminated total crusade as unrealistic, despite its evident and understandable temptation as a method. In consequence, we have faced a sequence of dangerous but not definitive crises which forced us to explore the character of our abiding interests, the limits of our power, and the limits of our idealism.

We have been confronted, then, in foreign and military policy by delicate and troubling problems of balance which we could no longer ignore or conceal in comforting myths. At their core, these problems link directly to the general issue: how should American ideals be weighed relative to more conventional interests? From the first reserved response to the Truman Doctrine in 1947 as too militaristic and bypassing the United Nations, down to the current foreign aid debate, a decade later, Americans have wrestled honestly if indecisively with many versions of this question which is no more nor less than the nature of the national interest. To what extent is the American interest in the world to protect the handsome real estate of this island continent; to what extent is the American interest to maintain a world environment for this society which will permit it to maintain its abiding values; and, if both are judged legitimate (for the second concept embraces the first, and the first may require the second for its fulfillment), how shall the pursuit of the two interests be related and balanced? These great issues have been explicitly on the nation's agenda since Mahan began to influence some Americans in positions of authority more than a half-century ago; and they were sharply posed, in quite different ways, by the First and Second World Wars. But it is only in the postwar decade that they have been thrust, day after day, year after year, upon the nation in contexts that made evasion difficult.

Thus, at home and abroad, the image of the United States as a national community dedicated to strive towards the values of the Enlightenment has not lost its relevance; but the major problems raised by this commitment have altered and, above all, the nation has been forced to wrestle with its values before the world as it exercised major power status in a decade's protracted Cold War.

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CHANGING INCENTIVES AND ALTERNATIVES IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN LIFE

It will be recalled that the second component of the classic American style was taken to be the fact that the setting of American society both required and made attractive a peculiarly vigorous pursuit of material advantage through individual enterprise. The rewards of power, social status, adventure, and material satisfaction tended all to derive from personal performance in the market place, notably after (about) 1830, when the initial generation of political leaders passed from the scene and the surge to the West and into industrialization gathered momentum. From such evidence as is available we must conclude that contemporary Americans, faced with a somewhat different range of realistic alternatives than Americans of earlier generations, have, to a degree, shifted their scale of effective values. The reasons for this shift are complex, and the author, for one, is not prepared to offer anything like a full explanation. What can be said is that American society – the terrain within which individual human beings must choose to fulfill alternative values and aspirations – has altered, and the change is part of an interacting process which has brought about the shift in values.

There are, perhaps, four major specific respects in which the alternatives offered by the American environment to the individual have shifted.

1) The level and apparent security of real income has diminished the scale of effort required to meet expected levels of welfare, and, among other things, it has permitted the option of increased leisure, earlier marriages, and more children, with diminished felt sacrifice in material income. In short, if we assume that the economists' concept of diminishing relative marginal utility is generally applicable, one could say that the rise in the level and security of material welfare has diminished the marginal utility of money as against the private values of marriage, babies, leisure, etc.

2) The urbanization and bureaucratization of American life have, both in fact and in prevalent image, altered the setting in which Americans work and must seek to fulfill their talents. The shift is, broadly, from individual or small-scale enterprises to group and large-scale institutions. This shift to bureaucracy may have encouraged men increasingly to express their individuality in areas

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outside the market place and to alter their norms of behavior on the job to conform to the requirements of large-scale institutions.

3) The rise in the scale and scope of government has shifted a number of the places of power and prestige out of the economy into the service of the state. And a higher proportion of the talents of the society than in earlier times is now – full-time or part-time – in the state's service. The convergence of power, adventure, status, and material reward no longer exists to the degree that it classically did in the private sector of the economy.

4) The threat of a Third World War and the shadow of the new weapons may, to a degree, have altered the older American optimism and sense of confidence in the progressive and successful unfolding of a long future. The insecurity of the postwar world may have helped reduce the premium Americans attached to the economic future over the present, while increasing their concern with values which transcend the vicissitudes of a life-span – notably family and religion.

In these respects, the interweaving of facets of the welfare and garrison states may help to account for those shifts in national values – reflected in phenomena as palpable as the birthrate and as elusive as the hopes and fears of the young – which, we all sense, requires some revision in the classic view of the dominant cultural values of American society.

CAN THE NATION SOLVE ITS PROBLEMS?

The third component of the classic national style was judged to be its continuity of experience and setting. This continuity permitted the nation to resolve conflicts between public idealism and special interests through relatively stable processes of political and social compromise and to adjust to a changing reality by processes of vigorous experiment and incremental innovation. Two questions now arise: Has the American method for handling its problems significantly changed? Are the problems confronting the nation – now and over the foreseeable future – capable of being dealt with by means of its contemporary operating style?

On domestic matters, the classic style still operates. And, over a wide range of issues, it operates with a heightened effectiveness. The two major political parties continue to work as intermediate instruments of compromise and reconciliation on a continental basis.

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The private voluntary associations within American communities have never been more active, more devoted to commonly shared objectives, or equipped with a longer agenda of communal good works. And when one examines the classic sources of conflict within the national community – labor and capital, the farm and the city, regional interests, racial and minority groups – one finds each conflict has been softened – not eliminated, but softened – by the increased physical and social homogeneity of the society, as well as by the persistence of high levels of employment and rising standards of welfare, excepting, as before, the desegregation issue.

There remains, nevertheless, a group of major domestic problems which are awkward because they do not lend themselves to the most familiar forms of political resolution. The process of solving national problems has, in the past, been accelerated by the fact that the major issues involved urgent and direct special interests of particular groups within the nation. These groups were articulate; they pressed hard on politicians anxious to pick up marginal votes; and the interplay of unambiguous special interests drove the political process forward. But the agenda of American domestic life for the next decade, as nearly as we can perceive it, consists in large part of issues where the problem is not so much to compromise conflicting group interests as it is for the community to act (or fail to act) as a collectivity on an expanded range of common interests. This is the case with the problem of inflation; with school buildings and teachers' salaries; enlarged road-building programs; the rebuilding of the old cities, including the clearance of slums; public health; the care of the aged; and so on. If some or all of this agenda is to be dealt with, the community must decide that extra dollars spent on communal purposes outweigh the value of marginal dollars spent within the private budget. The struggle must take place to a substantial degree within the mind of the individual citizen rather than among different groups of citizens, each motivated by overriding special interests. American national politics is shifting, in a sense, towards the long familiar patterns and issues of small town politics – the roads, the schools, and all the rest.

These communal problems must be faced at a time when the public budget is strained by security outlays, and by the unavoidable consequences of providing minimum public services for a rapidly expanding population. They cannot be resolved by soaking

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the rich. They confront the community either with inflation or some alternate form of sacrifice: the nation will have to judge among degrees of risk in the missiles race, the quality of education for the young, and the horsepower of its automobiles.

It is by no means clear that the American community is incapable of making the calculation intelligently; i.e., in such a way as to preserve the society's fundamental values and its physical security. The communal trend of national life and experience should make sound decision on these problems easier than it would have been in the 1920's. Nevertheless, how the community decides to dispose of its annual increment in real income as among security outlays abroad, communal outlays at home, and the private budget will prove a searching and, in some respects, a new form of challenge to the political and social process at the national level.

In short, American politics is shifting away from its classic task of compromising special interests to the task of harmonizing private and public values. And within the area of public values there is a clash between the imperatives of a welfare state (with a rapidly expanding population) and the imperatives of American survival on the world scene. There is a clear and basic continuity in our political processes; but they must be adjusted to deal with a problem, familiar enough in kind, but new in its scale.

With respect to techniques of innovation outside of politics there is no doubt that the national style is now less empirical than it once was and that the major institutions of the nation, both private and public, are increasingly sensitive to the problem of how innovation can be induced in large bureaucratic institutions.

In industry there has been an enormous enlargement of funds available for research, and a new high status is accorded not merely the natural scientist and engineer, but the economist, the psychologist as personnel expert, the sociologist or social psychologist willing to apply his skills to market research, and so on. American business has come to take an increasingly explicit view of its relation to the economy and, even, to the whole society of which it is a part. Industrial economists examine long-period trends in population and income, seeking to deduce the trend in demand for their firm's products and, thus, the appropriate rate of investment. They study their firm's relations to the public and to the political process in much the same way. In addition to their expanded staffs of assorted experts, the large American firms draw in all manner of expert

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consultants, freed of bureaucratic responsibilities and the operator's vested interests, to help them identify their problems and to propose innovational solutions. The vogue of the outside expert (as well as the brainstorming session) indicates that Americans are not settling for the values of Kafka-like bureaucracy without a struggle.

The American business firm, then, is no longer an atomistic unit concentrated on the current behavior of its prices and its costs, guessing as shrewdly as it can its future prospects, making relatively simple profit-maximizing decisions, whose only communal concern is to ensure that its officers keep out of jail. It is a self-conscious unit in a complex, interacting society, trying to understand as well as to exploit its environment, trying to influence (if not fully to determine) its own technological, social, and political setting.

There has been a parallel revolution in the institutions and attitudes of the national government, notably in national security policy where, in a sense, we are committed to try to influence world history in our own interest. During the Second World War (quite aside from the atomic bomb) all three military services found that the natural scientist, the economist, the psychologist, and, even, the psychiatrist had important uses. And, in the postwar period, a relatively elevated status for the staff man was institutionalized in new planning machinery, both within the major bureaucracies and among them, notably, in the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the National Security Council. Like modern business, modern government bureaucracy has sought out and used the occasional consultant with great vigor. The post-1945 soldier remains respectful of the academic and the intellectual. There is, for example, no more radical and significant shift in the institutions of American life than the wide scope of the training now given to the professional military at the various war colleges as compared to the narrow prewar curricula, and the altered character of the roster of lecturers.

So far as the direction of change is concerned, American society has, then, responded to the innovational challenges it has faced at home and abroad, and it has begun to restructure its attitudes and institutions in the directions required to meet them. The operative question is, however, whether these changes are likely to prove sufficient in scale and appropriate in direction to protect the nation's interests in a peculiarly treacherous world arena of power.

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A CONCLUSION

How, finally, shall we assess the national style?

The relevant criterion is, surely, this: to what extent does it permit us to preserve our chosen values while protecting our common interests? In one way or another this question has been central to American life since the nation was formed under the Constitution, and it is not to be expected that we could now render a definitive judgment. As befits living men and a lively culture, we are in the midst of an unresolved, active process.

We are trying to reconcile a commitment to the unique, responsible individual with two sets of forces: those set in motion by the maturing of an industrial welfare state; and those impinging on us from a world caught up in a struggle for power and in massive revolutionary change. Since nations, like people, live in a context of uncertainty, we cannot know the outcome of the process. We cannot be sure that the concept of the individual in a democratic society, as we have defined it historically, will survive in some recognizable form the blandishments and pressures of welfare and garrison states. We cannot assert with confidence that we shall achieve tolerable solutions to the problems thrown up by an age of fusion weapons and world-wide nationalist revolutions. What we can do is to observe the national style grappling with the contemporary agenda; and we can prescribe as we are moved to do.

Surveying a scene where the individual appears hard pressed, many of our wisest and most perceptive men have ended by reaffirming the continued legitimacy and sanctity of the concept of the unique human personality. Riesman, for example, closes *The Lonely Crowd* with: "on one thing I am quite sure . . . men are created different; they lose their social freedom and their individual autonomy in seeking to become like each other." Such reaffirmations – notably those of our novelists – are often colored, however, by a kind of defeatism, by an explicit or implicit judgment that the requirements of large-scale organization or the requirements of an effective communal effort require the individual to surrender to the alleged needs of the group and to work out his private destiny by some Hegelian sublimation or by enlarging the private area of withdrawal. The argument of this paper would, to a degree, challenge such pessimism. A reassertion of the importance of the unique individual may not only be good for our

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souls but, also, essential to a more effective communal and national performance.

We are caught up in an age of radical innovation. Innovation requires ideas and that special kind of answerable courage in which men lead others in taking steps in the dark.[14] Ideas and courage are the gifts of lonely individuals, not of committees or bureaucracies. If the national style accommodates itself to the problems we face, there should emerge a new respect and status for the individual loyal to his private vision.

So far as administration is concerned, it is clear that neither in nor out of government are there grounds for complacency. We have evidently not yet solved the problem of efficient large-scale organization in an age of radical innovation. It may emerge that we are now merely in an awkward transition, having carried over too hastily the patterns of large-scale mass production into large-scale organization. Our present steep organizational pyramids may give way to shallower structures, with increasing degrees of autonomy for the individual, fewer layers of command, fewer decisions negotiated by committees. It may well be that as we take the measure of the requirements of organized life in the twentieth century and, especially, when we weigh the claims of innovation over static order in our bureaucracies, we will find that we can do our business with smaller staffs, with higher degrees of personal responsibility, acknowledging more openly than we now do that the success of our common enterprises hinges on strong-minded, responsible, and creative men. We may, in short, learn how to institutionalize the insights we display only at moments of crisis.

Something parallel to this restructuring of our bureaucracies may be demanded of our intellectual life. If our universities are to make the contribution to society they should in an age requiring radical innovation, they must look beyond Ranke's rule of sources and develop more general concepts of man and the world. It is out of the intermediate and higher ranges of abstraction that new ways of looking at things emerge; and it is from new ways of looking at things that solutions are found to new problems. Without losing our grip on facts and our respect for their hard reality, we must begin to transcend the pre-1914 German patterns on which our

[14] "... all great and honorable actions are accompanied with great difficulties and must be both enterprised and overcome with answerable courages." William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation,* ed. S. E. Morison (New York: 1952).

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intellectual trade schools are still largely based. With all due respect for James and Dewey, it takes more than a common sense instinctive to the round of American life to deal with the age of guided missiles; the age of revolution in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa; and with that exciting but dangerous passage of history in which communism as we have known it discovers that it is not historically viable. To bring to bear what understanding the human mind can generate demands more than shelves of specialized monographs. We must come to give as much systematic thought to the problem of unifying knowledge as we now give to the more familiar process of extending its factual range. And this can only come about if we encourage the individual to strike out boldly on his own; for intellectual synthesis is an event that takes place in a single mind.

Somehow, finally, we must, if we are to succeed, find ways of suffusing the national government with a sense of private adventure; for a high proportion of the society's tasks of innovation must, in the end, be carried out in Washington. The individual human beings in the great bureaucracies must be encouraged to think, to throw up new ideas, to debate. The illusion that our affairs can successfully be handled by negotiating minimum consensus, in layer after layer of interdepartmental committees, must be broken. The government must recapture a sense that creation is something we badly need; that creation is a job for men backing their play with integrity; and this spirit must suffuse the whole apparatus, from the office of the President to the lowest GS-5. The interdepartmental machinery of negotiation and consensus will, of course, continue to grind along. Certain heavy imperatives of order must, of course, continue to be respected. The age-old patterns of bureacratic life will not suddenly be broken. But the bureaucratic processes must be made to grind on something other than departmental vested interests and the pre-compromised views of men anxious, above all, to avoid controversy or trouble.

One can assert with confidence that these are the directions in which our society must move if it is to maximize the chance that it deal successfully with its problems. It is quite another matter to predict with confidence that we shall, in fact, learn how to suffuse our national life and institutions with a new individualism. The skeptic's case is easy to make. The image of vast institutions, apparently beyond the control or even the comprehension of any

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individual, with a logic and momentum of their own, is strong in all our minds. The expertise which they absorb and use is increasingly specialized. Individual men appear to know only a diminishing part of the total information on which action must be based. But we must be careful not to be taken in by images of our own creation. The truly important policies of our great institutions, and even of the national government, are, in the end, still made by a few men; for there is no other way. It is difficult to bring to bear the insights of many specialized areas of knowledge on a particular problem; but it is done every day, better or worse, by those who must act.

It is, in short, too soon to despair. Our children are still born into the world with very strong egos; and the long lesson of the past is that history is tolerant of the individual if he avoids the larger illusions of grandeur.

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TEXTS AND MOTIFS

D. H. Lawrence: "The Plumed Serpent"

IN THIS brief excerpt, all the world's hatred of America is distilled as his own by a great and poetic seer. Lawrence's is a voice against which all contributors to this collection of essays implicitly argue. It is no small argument, this, on the worth and direction of our civilization. Almost everywhere, now—not least among ourselves—when official attitudes are laid aside, the sides are engaged very much as Henry Murray has deployed them in the second essay of this number. At the suggestion of Clyde Kluckhohn, we offer this savage devaluation of America as counterpoint to the sweeter melody.

The Plumed Serpent*

. . . AND sometimes she wondered whether America really was the great death-continent, the great *No!* to the European and Asiatic and even African *Yes!* Was it really the great melting pot, where men from the creative continents were smelted back again, not to a new creation, but down into the homogeneity of death? Was it the great continent of the undoing, and all its peoples the agents of the mystic destruction! Plucking, plucking at the created soul in a man, till at last it plucked out the growing germ, and left him a creature of mechanism and automatic reaction, with only one inspiration, the desire to pluck the quick out of every living spontaneous creature.

Was that the clue to America, she sometimes wondered. Was it the great death-continent, the continent that destroyed again what the other continents had built up. The continents whose spirit of place fought purely to pick the eyes out of the face of God. Was that America?

And all the people who went there, Europeans, negroes, Japanese, Chinese, all the colours and the races, were they the spent people, in whom the God impulse had collapsed, so they crossed to the great continent of the negation, where the human will declares

* Reprinted from the Vintage edition of *The Plumed Serpent* by D. H. Lawrence, by arrangement with the publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

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itself "free," to pull down the soul of the world? Was it so? And did this account for the great drift to the New World, the drift of spent souls passing over to the side of Godless democracy, energetic negation? The negation which is the life-breath of materialism. And would the great negative pull of the Americans at last break the heart of the world?

This thought would come to her, time and again.

She herself, what had she come to America for?

Because the flow of her life had broken, and she knew she could not re-start it, in Europe.

These handsome natives! Was it because they were death-worshippers, Moloch-worshippers, that they were so uncowed and handsome? Their pure acknowledgment of death, and their undaunted admission of nothingness kept so erect and careless.

White men had had a soul, and lost it. The pivot of fire had been quenched in them, and their lives had started to spin in the reversed direction, widdershins. That reversed look which is in the eyes of so many white people, the look of nullity, and life wheeling in the reversed direction. . . .

Oh America, with your unspeakable hard lack of charm, what then is your final meaning! Is it forever the knife of sacrifice, as you put out your tongue at the world?

Charmless America! With your hard, vindictive beauty, are you waiting forever to smite death? Is the world your everlasting victim?

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OPINIONS AND ISSUES

In establishing a Department presenting opinions on contemporary issues, the Editors have obtained the personal consent of Dr. Linus Pauling and of Dr. Edward Teller to print in full the text of their debate on the topic "Fallout and Disarmament," held on February 20, 1958, in San Francisco.*

This material is, as it were, an illustration in operational terms of problems to which the first five papers in this number are devoted. In these two moving attempts to state persuasive positions we do not, of course, look merely for factual data, on which agreement could conceivably be reached. Rather, we look for the deeper differences between the antagonists – differences in those values which determine the quality of the hopes, the fears, and the driving images invoked on the awesome question of survival.

Fallout and Disarmament

A Debate between Linus Pauling and Edward Teller

Moderator: Probably no question has weighed heavier upon the conscience of twentieth-century man than the question of how to direct his own genius toward the elevation of mankind without unintentionally commiting self-destruction. Central to this question is the matter of the development, testing, and control of nuclear weapons.

We in the United States bear an enormous burden in the decisions which must be made. Not only were we foremost in the development and testing of these weapons; more importantly, it is the very essence of democracy that the people are sovereign in determining the policies to be pursued with respect to their future use. It is apparent that we are appallingly unprepared to make these decisions. This may be due in some measure to the secrecy which has necessarily surrounded the development of nuclear weaponry. Unquestionably, it is due to the complexity of the question itself. Not even those best qualified to judge agree about the facts or the conclusions to be drawn from these facts.

*Copies of the transcript can be ordered at 50¢ each from KQED, the San Francisco-Bay Area's educational television station which originated and produced the program. We thank them for permission to reprint the text.

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In an effort to sharpen the focus upon this compelling question, two of the world's leading scientists agreed to debate the issue of "Fallout and Disarmament." Each speaks from personal convictions based upon experience, thoughtful consideration, and a profound knowledge of the subtleties involved. Both agreed, in the interest of a fair debate, to abide by strict time limits in their presentations.

The first argument will be presented by Dr. Linus Pauling. He was born in Portland, Oregon, and educated in Oregon and California. He is professor of chemistry and chairman of the Division of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering at the California Institute of Technology. Dr. Pauling has published works in the fields of physics, geology, biology, chemistry, and medicine. He is a member of the French Academy of Medicine, winner of the Phillips Medal of the American College of Physicians, and a Nobel Laureate in Chemistry for his research on the nature of the chemical bond. More recently he has been conducting a study of hereditary diseases caused by high intensity radiation. Dr. Pauling is also the initiator of the petition signed by more than 9,000 scientists urging that an international agreement be made to stop the testing of all nuclear weapons, a petition which was submitted in January of this year to the United Nations.

Linus Pauling: I am a scientist. I am interested in the world, this wonderful world that we live in, and I am especially interested in human beings. This world that we live in is really a wonderful one, as we have found out through the discoveries of science.

The greatest of all these discoveries is the discovery of the way to release the great stores of energy that are in the nuclei of atoms. I think that this is going to make the world an even better place to live in. It is, of course, this discovery that also led to the development of nuclear weapons, atomic bombs, and hydrogen bombs.

These weapons are terrible. One great bomb that has been detonated has an explosive energy that is sixteen times greater than that of all of the explosives used in the Second World War.

I don't know how many of these bombs exist. The number such as 10,000 in the United States stockpile and a similar number in the Russian stockpile have been mentioned. I am sure that the United States has enough of these terrible weapons to destroy the world, and that Russia has enough to do the same.

We must not have a nuclear war. We must begin to solve inter-

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national disputes by the application of man's power of reason in a way that is worthy of the dignity of man. We must solve them by arbitration, negotiation, the development of international law, the making of international agreements that will do justice to all nations and to all peoples and will benefit all nations and all peoples. Now is the time to start.

I feel strongly about this. Some months ago, after I had given a talk in the Graham Memorial Chapel of Washington University in St. Louis, I was encouraged to prepare an appeal to stop bomb tests. Then after this appeal had been signed by more than two thousand American scientists in a period of two weeks, I began to get voluntary expressions of adherence to this appeal from scientists in other countries. I then wrote a few hundred letters to scientists in other countries whom I know and to those whose names I had got out of the scientific literature and reference books, and I received in a few months thousands more of answers, so that on the thirteenth of January of this year I was able to present a petition with 9,235 signatures of scientists in 44 countries, 36 Nobel Laureates, and 101 members of the American National Academy of Sciences to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Now, in the issue of *Life* for the tenth of February, 1958, there has been published an attack on this petition. I call it an attack on this petition, because on the cover of *Life* is the statement: "DOCTOR TELLER REFUTES NINE THOUSAND SCIENTISTS," and the sub-heading says "FATHER OF H-BOMB AND COLLEAGUE ANSWER NINE THOUSAND SCIENTISTS: FALLOUT RISK IS OVERRATED . . ."

Moreover, I call it an attack because it contains many statements that are not true and many statements that are seriously misleading. I should like to read a sentence in this article: "Since the people are the sovereign power in a democracy, it is of the greatest importance that they should be honestly and completely informed about all the relevant facts." They are not honestly informed or completely informed by this article.

Let me give some examples. The first sentence says the petition was presented to the U.N. The second sentence says – "The petition said that the tests were endangering both the present population of the world and generations yet unborn." And then it continues in the second paragraph to say that this *is not true*. This statement, and a statement that is also made that I shall refer to in a moment, *are not true*.

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Now, the petition in fact does not make the statement attributed to it. The petition says – "Each added amount of radiation causes damage to the health of human beings all over the world, and causes damage to the pool of human germ plasm such as to lead to an increase in the number of seriously defective children that will be born in future generations." This statement *is* true.

I don't know just how this article got written and published. It is, of course, an old trick of a politician to attribute to his adversary an untrue statement that he has not made and then to demolish it.

The third sentence says – "Dr. Linus Pauling, the American scientist who presented the document to the U.N., said further that in his opinion the U.S. will never achieve one of the principal objectives of its nuclear tests: the production of a 'clean' bomb . . . that is, one with little or no radioactivity." And in the next paragraph that statement, too, is said to be not true.

The fact is that I have never made such a statement. Surely the authors of the article knew that I know enough about nuclear bombs not to have made this statement. I cannot understand how this untrue statement could have been included in the article.

I wonder if it could be that a statement that I have made could have confused them? I once said, and I have repeated it, that to call any weapon that can kill millions of human beings a "clean" bomb is to insult a noble word in the English language.

There are other erroneous statements in the article. It said – "If tests continue at the present rate, radiation levels might increase as much as five-fold. But even in this situation it is extremely unlikely that anyone would receive a lifetime dosage of as much as 5 roentgens from worldwide fallout."

Now, the authors *surely know* that in the Fourteenth Semi-Annual Report of the Atomic Energy Commission, published in July, 1953, it is stated that 7000 inhabitants in Nevada and Utah received 5 roentgens or more of fallout radiation after some tests of small bombs at the Nevada testing ground. These include 4500 residents of St. George, Utah, who were reported to have received 3½ roentgens in a 13 week period; and it also says that fifty per cent more would be *expected later* from the same fallout.

Perhaps the joker in this statement is "worldwide" fallout. But it is not so. Fallout is defined by the authors as consisting of local fallout and worldwide fallout. Local fallout is the radioactive

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contamination that falls to earth in a short time and contaminates only the test area itself. The rest of it is worldwide fallout, according to the authors of this article. So that they either have to say that the inhabitants of Southern Utah are in the test area or that this statement is untrue.

Another untrue statement relates to the incidence of leukemia in Denver as compared with San Francisco and New Orleans. Leukemia occurs, according to medical reports, in somewhat larger amounts in San Francisco and New Orleans than in Denver, even though there is known to be a greater amount of cosmic radiation, high energy radiation, similar somewhat to fallout radiation, in Denver.

Now, the authors continue: "The only things these statistics prove is that radiation in small doses need not necessarily be harmful — indeed, may conceivably be helpful." This statement is not true. The statistics do not prove that small amounts of radiation are not necessarily harmful or may conceivably be helpful. It may be that the difference of the statistics is a result of a difference in medical practice, or some other factor — a difference in the amount of radioactivity in drinking water — I don't know. At any rate, this statement is untrue.

Radioactive fallout causes damage to the pool of human germ plasm that does result in the birth of an additional number of defective children. I have estimated that the amount of increase in the mutation rate as the result of radioactive fallout from testing carried on at the present rate is one per cent — a one per cent increase in the number of defective children who will be born in the future.

Professor Beadle, professor of biology, chairman of the Division of Biology in the California Institute of Technology, one of the world's leading geneticists, a distinguished authority in this field and conservative in all of his statements, has told me that in his public statements, he, also, has made the estimate of one per cent.

There are every year 75,000,000 children born in the world. Two per cent of these children are seriously deficient because of heredity, bad genes, the bad genes that are in the pool of human germ plasm, partially due to the natural radioactivity and cosmic rays, and now being increased by fallout. Two per cent of 75,000,000 is 1,500,000 seriously defective children born each year with various grave diseases that cause them to die shortly after birth or in early child-

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hood, to have mental deficiency or serious physical defects that make them suffer all of their lives, or to live their lives in mental institutions. One per cent increase in this is 15,000 seriously defective children a year. According to my estimates, Dr. Beadle's estimates, and the estimates of Professor James F. Crow of the University of Wisconsin, another distinguished geneticist, this is the number that will be born each year when equilibrium is reached.

Moreover, the amount of testing at the present time corresponds to one large bomb, one superbomb with ten megatons of fission released. We can say, accordingly, that the man who gives the order to test a single large superbomb with high fission yield is dooming 15,000 seriously defective children to be born in later generations. Also, there are serious effects on the health of human beings now living, according to the information that is now available.

This is the opinion that I and many of my scientific colleagues, a great many, have.

Moderator: The opposing argument is to be presented by Dr. Edward Teller, professor of physics at the University of California at Berkeley.

Dr. Teller was born in Hungary, educated in Europe, and has been in the United States since 1935. For the past nineteen years he has been a key figure in both theoretical and practical research in the field of nuclear explosives. As a member of the Reactor Safeguard Committee of the Atomic Energy Commission, Dr. Teller has been closely connected with studies on the control of radiation hazards. He is co-author, with Dr. Albert L. Latter, of the new book *Our Nuclear Future – Facts, Dangers and Opportunities*. Brief excerpts from this book were published recently in *Life* magazine.

Edward Teller: It is a very great pleasure to appear on this broadcast together with Dr. Linus Pauling. I have admired many phases of his work.

Without any particular reason for selecting it, I would like to mention one: his research on the structure of silicates in the rocks, giant molecules, and his later related work on the giant molecules of the proteins in our bodies. These discoveries, made by similar methods, are of very great importance in helping us to understand ourselves.

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I also am happy about the fact that this discussion is on an educational television station. I would like to stress this word "education." The problems which we are discussing here are very important. The word "education" means that we should approach this question slowly and cautiously and listen to all sides of the argument.

I cannot pretend, unfortunately – I wish I could – that I completely agree with Professor Pauling. I don't. If you are left with the conviction that he is right in everything he says, I believe you are making a mistake.

I have thought about these things carefully for many years in doing my work, and more recently, while looking into facts of other people's work, and writing a book about it. If you are left believing everything I have said, I won't be satisfied either. What I hope is that you will take time to think about these things carefully, to talk it over, and then slowly to arrive at a conclusion about this extremely important question.

I would like to emphasize at the outset that there are many, many facts about which Dr. Pauling and I agree. There are many facts accepted in what he says and what we have written, and the more you look into details, the more you will find that the basic facts and also the basic assumption about what we all want *are* the same. I regret if any disagreements are too strongly emphasized, because this is obviously a question of great importance and a question where our feelings can have a serious effect. A more serious effect, perhaps, than they should.

The first points on which I would like to agree very strongly with Dr. Pauling are his quest for peace and his great appreciation for human life. It is absolutely clear that we want peace, and we have to work for it. It is absolutely clear that each human life has a high value and should not be sacrificed, except for very, very good reasons; and then what it does to you, if you have sacrificed this, cannot be helped.

Peace cannot be obtained by wishing for it. We live in the same world with Russia, whose leader has said that he "wants to bury us"– and he means it. Disarmament, the cessation of tests, will not automatically bring us closer to peace. It has been often said, and I think with some justification, that the first world war was brought on by a race in armament. I believe that the second world war was brought on by a race in *disarmament*. The peace-loving nations disarmed, and when the Hitler tyranny armed, the inertia was too

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great . . . he got away with his army and he almost conquered the world. Next time when a tyranny arms and we don't, we might not be so fortunate.

Furthermore – and this is a very important thing – if we stop developing our nuclear weapons, I do not believe that we can check whether the Russians have done the same. An agreement with the Russians will be essentially as good as their word, and no better.

This is why I fear that disarmament and cessation of nuclear tests are not on the right road, and I am particularly worried about it, because we are playing for big stakes. We are playing not only for our lives, we are playing for something more. We are playing for freedom, for our own freedom, for the freedom of our friends and allies. The world has become small, and everybody's freedom is sacred. Anyone who is willing to defend his own freedom should get our support in defending that freedom.

We must avoid war under all possible circumstances, except, in my opinion, one: when the freedom of human beings is at stake.

In case there should be a war – and let us not suppose there will be – I think if we stay strong and if we continue to be sure of ourselves and know, and let the Russians know, that we will defend ourselves, I think that is the best way to peace. But all this means that we must be prepared, and it also means that we cannot be sure that there won't be war. If there is war, if the terrible catastrophe befalls us, then next we must try to keep that war as small as possible, and at the same time we must try to be sure that no more people will unwillingly be subjected to the Russian yoke. This means that we must be prepared to meet the Russians wherever they choose to attack; that we should be able to meet them rapidly, and that means very great mobility, which in turn means the necessity of small and effective arms – in my opinion, atomic bombs. I think limited wars can be fought, and I think they can be fought even with nuclear weapons and be kept limited.

If this should happen, then it would be of great importance that these weapons should do as little damage in human life as possible. If a war of this kind has to be fought, then the danger from radioactivity will be very great indeed. I shall talk about the damage due to radioactivity from testing – it is something about which I continue to say one does not need to worry, certainly not to the same extent as one needs to worry about a war. But in the case of a war in which nuclear weapons were used, it would

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be extremely important that one should limit the damage to what one actually intends to damage. And this means – this absolutely means – that we must try to get away from radioactivity as much as possible. This is what I mean when I talk about clean weapons. The word "clean," any word, has not the business to be a noble word; it should be a *precise word*. And the precise word in this case means to my mind that there should not be unnecessary, uncontrollable radioactive dust – radioactive contamination, which would kill friend and foe alike.

One can go even further. One can talk about the cleanliness, not of weapons, but of nuclear explosives. Because we are making great strides toward non-radioactive weapons, towards non-radioactive explosives, there is, therefore, now the possibility that we can use nuclear explosives for peaceful purposes, for digging canals, for extracting the riches from the earth and helping many people to live a better life. All this is possible only if you have clean nuclear explosives. I hope Dr. Pauling will grant that this is a worthwhile thing to do. This is the sense in which we use the word "clean."

I would like to apologize if we have misunderstood him in any way. The *New York Times* has reported Dr. Pauling as saying he expressed the belief that it would be impossible to produce a clean bomb. I would like to know whether the *New York Times* has misquoted Dr. Pauling and whether he asked the *New York Times* to correct that misquotation. In any case, I am sorry if we have misunderstood.

Now, at last, I would like to come to the question of damage. I would like to say this: there is no doubt that some radioactivity is spread throughout the world by nuclear explosions. Dr. Pauling says this causes damage. He expresses his concern that this damage will be quite serious, may kill people. We call this a danger. If we have thereby overstepped then I will humbly apologize for the difference between a damage that can be deadly, which Dr. Pauling meant, and a danger, which at that point he did not mean, even though a little later he says, in the same appeal, "As scientists we have knowledge of the danger involved." This may have helped to mislead us in believing that Dr. Pauling *was* talking about dangers.

Now, let me tell you right here, this alleged damage which the small radioactivity is causing – supposedly cancer and leukemia – has not been proved, to the best of my knowledge, by any kind of

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decent and clear statistics. It is possible that there *is* damage. It is even possible, to my mind, that there is *no damage;* and there is the possibility, furthermore, that very small amounts of radioactivity are helpful. Some people believe in the healing powers of radioactive waters. I do not. It is an unscientific belief. The conviction that small amounts of radioactivity are necessarily damaging is, I think, not proved either.

There is another point, and the point that Dr. Pauling had mentioned last: the question of genetics. We know enough about the mechanism of heredity to be sure that changes will be made in the germ plasm, just as Dr. Pauling has said, and many, very many, probably the great majority of these changes will be damaging. Yet without some changes, evolution would be impossible.

I would like to leave with you one thought, and perhaps we will want to return to it: If we proceeded in everything with as great a caution as we are proceeding in the case of nuclear testing, there would be very little progress in the world. Dr. Pauling, as a great progressive, surely does not want that.

Linus Pauling: Dr. Teller has said that peace cannot be obtained by wishing for it. We are not going to achieve peace without starting to solve the world's problems, by developing international law and making agreements, international agreements, that are safe for every nation in the world, that do justice to all the nations in the world. We need to work. We need to put into the effort for these international agreements an amount of work that is comparable to that of the forty billion dollars a year that we put into armaments.

We need to have great amounts of discussion; conferences between scientists and specialists of all sorts, of Americans and Russians; top level conferences, but also lower conferences, until a satisfactory agreement has been reached.

The Russians have proposed that there be a cessation, an agreement to stop bomb tests, with a satisfactory system of controls and inspections, and we have proposed that there be the same sort of agreement including, also, the stopping of further stockpiling of atomic weapons. I have verified this with Mr. Stassen in a talk with him in January, 1958. I'm sure that it is possible to achieve a reasonable compromise that will be acceptable to all nations, that will decrease the danger of the outbreak of a cataclysmic war, and

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will also stop the damage that is being done to future generations and to the health of human beings who are now living.

About Khrushchev saying that "we shall bury you": we have to get along with the Russians or be killed. The estimate made by Dr. Kellogg, in his testimony before the Congressional Sub-Committee on Radiation Damage, was that an attack on the U. S. with 250 nuclear weapons would lead to 72,000,000 people killed at the end of two months, 21,000,000 seriously injured, 58,000,000 still living.

Dr. Teller would like to see nuclear wars fought in such a way that not so many people are killed; only the young men, the tens of millions of young men who make up our armies, and those few tens of millions, perhaps, rather than hundreds of millions of civilians who cannot be protected against death even with an expensive system of underground shelters.

I didn't interpret the statement that Khrushchev made, "we shall bury you," in the way that Dr. Teller did. It seems to me from his context that he was saying that socialism-communism in the world will bury capitalism, not by war, but just through the development of the political systems in various countries. I, of course, do not want this to happen. I don't like this idea. I believe that we need to have different kinds of political systems, that we need to have different nations, but that the way to settle the problem of the differences is not to kill off most of the people in the world, or a large fraction of the people in the world with these terrrible nuclear weapons.

Dr. Teller has asked me about a statement that he read from the *New York Times*, that I had said that it would be impossible to make a clean bomb. I have never seen that statement. I have never seen the article itself. I haven't responded to it. I can only say I never made the statement that it is impossible to make a bomb with little or no radioactivity. Perhaps Dr. Teller could tell us whether he thinks it is possible to make and detonate a bomb that has no radioactivity whatsoever. I have made a statement about a clean bomb using the word "clean" in a somewhat different sense.

Dr. Teller says we must meet the Russians wherever they choose to attack. This sounds to me as though he were preparing for a nuclear war. I do not believe that there is going to be a nuclear war. I believe that these great stockpiles of nuclear weapons are really deterrents, as President Eisenhower has described them·

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deterrents that will prevent war; and that the next step that we really need to take is the step of instituting an effective, sound, safe system of settling international differences, international disputes, by arbitration.

Now, to carry on the tests means, as I have said, that according to the best estimates of geneticists, all of whom agree, 15,000 children are sacrificed for every large bomb tested that produces stratospheric radioactivity that slowly descends to the ground, gets into the grass, gets into the food of cattle, gets into the milk, and then gets into the bones of children. Dr. Teller and Dr. Latter in their article have said that this causes an increase of one-tenth per cent in the number of mutations. They do not mention the number of defective children that will be produced by a one-tenth per cent increase in the number of defective mutations; it is 1,500 a year. My estimate, and Professor Beadle's estimate, is 15,000 a year; the highest estimates that have been made go to 150,000 a year for testing at the present rate. That is, 1,500 children for one large bomb; 15,000 children, according to my estimate, for one large bomb, perhaps many more. Also, there is damage to the health of human beings now living.

We must make an agreement to stop the bomb tests!

Edward Teller: I should like to be very clear on one single point, coming back to what Dr. Pauling has said just now. Dr. Latter and I have estimated as carefully as we could a number of 1,500 damaged cases. This, of course, is a very big number. We may be wrong, and the number may be bigger, but it is necessary to get a feeling of how big these numbers are, and we make these estimates. We never said, we have no reason, and we see no reason to believe that there will be a *single case*. What we know is that there will not be very many more than 1,500. One thousand five hundred is not a measure of known numbers, it is a measure, an approximate measure, of the extent of our ignorance. When a new additive in our food is introduced, when we spread smog or smoke over our cities, when we do any number of many other things, we may cause much greater damage.

Here is a recent quotation from the British publication *Nature*. This says that due to our wearing tight clothes, and due to the increased temperature of the sperm plasm, to the organs which make our sperm, there will be an increase in mutations. Then it

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goes on to say that since our modes of dress have been predominate for several centuries, it might explain almost half the present load of spontaneous mutations. So we see how modes of dress, based chiefly on sexual taboos, might present genetic hazards one hundred to one thousand times greater than those estimated from different sources of radiation.

I say these things not to belittle 1,500 cases or a single case, but just to say that our ignorance is great. We don't know that we have killed anybody. I would be very disturbed by this knowledge, yet I have to search for it, and I am doing so.

I would like to ask for one kindness of Dr. Pauling, if he will grant it. He has very kindly interpreted Khrushchev's remark as not really meaning he wants to kill us. I wish he would interpret my remarks with equal magnanimity. He says I want nuclear war. He says I do not want to kill hundreds of millions of people, but just ten million young people. I believe that this is a little unjust. First of all, what I want is not to have war, and I am working as hard as I can for peace, although not along the same lines as Dr. Pauling. I believe I'm right, and I think that he is very honest in believing that he is right; he should work along his ways, and let's see what makes the most sense. However, I would like to say this: that even in the terrible event of war, I believe that in this war, if it were fought with the highly flexible and highly mobile nuclear weapons, it would not be necessary to take so many young people away from their homes. I do not believe, if we can localize wars, that the casualties need be very great. If they were, it would be clumsiness. We can develop bombs by which we could hit the war machines rather than the men, and we are trying as hard as we can to do just that.

Furthermore, we are trying to introduce by our strength some stability in the world. The moment we stop nuclear testing, the moment we give the chance to the Russians, which they'll surely take, to evade the test ban, we will make sure that they will feel so strong that they will want to take over the world, and they *will be able* to take over the world.

If we stay strong, then I believe we can stabilize the world and have peace based on force. Now, peace based on force is not as good as peace based on agreement, but in the terrible world in which we live, in the world where the Russians have enslaved many millions of human beings, in the world where they have killed

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men, I think that for the time being the only peace that we can have is the peace based on force. Furthermore, I do not think that this peace based on force is, can be, or should be, an ultimate end. Our ultimate end must be precisely what Dr. Pauling says, peace based on agreement, upon understanding, on universally agreed and enforced law. I think this is a wonderful idea, but peace based on force buys us the necessary time, and in this time we can work for better understanding, for closer collaboration, first with the countries which are closest to us, which we understand better, our allies, the Western countries, the NATO countries, which believe in human liberties as we do. Then, as soon as possible, with the rest of the free world, and eventually, I hope, with the whole world, including Russia, even though it may take many years to come.

Linus Pauling: I wish that Dr. Teller would explain these untrue statements in the article in *Life*. He says that the misquotation from the petition was possibly suggested by the fact that at the end of the petition we mentioned dangers. This was an untrue statement about the petition, a misquotation in the article. The dangers that we were referring to include the great danger of outbreak of catastrophic world war.

If testing continues and stockpiles of nuclear weapons get into the hands of a great many countries, as will soon happen – I don't know how long it will be before France, Sweden, many other countries, perhaps Israel and the Arab countries, North and South Korea, and Germany have nuclear weapons – then there would be great danger of outbreak of a catastrophic world war.

What about the amount of radiation to which the people in Utah have been exposed, an amount over 5 roentgens? That is an untrue statement, the statement about the interpretation of statistics. Moreover, there are other misleading statements.

Here is a statement, a paragraph about the people in Tibet who were exposed to large amounts of cosmic radiation, and it says "Yet the genetic differences have not been noticed in the humans of Tibet." Surely the authors of the article, before they wrote it, made the calculation and found out that the geneticists of the world agree that there should be a 15 per cent increase in the number of defective children born; only 1.5, if you take a lower estimate, but the average of geneticists is a 15 per cent increase in the number of defective children born. Who believes, who *is* there who believes, that

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medical statistics are good enough in Tibet to detect this 15 per cent increase in the number of defective children, as compared with other countries of the world?

This is a red herring. That is all that it is, designed to mislead the reader. Now, this misquotation from the petition published by *Life*, in this article of over 5000 words . . . *Life* magazine could not find space to quote the 247 words of the petition itself. If that had been there, the tens of millions of readers of that great national magazine would have been able to see that this was a misquotation; they would have learned what it is that the 9,235 scientists, including many distinguished ones of the world, are really concerned about; why it is that they have made this petition to the United Nations.

Edward Teller: Dr. Pauling wanted me to say what I think about these statements, these untrue statements. I would like the listener to judge, and I'll be very brief.

In the question of the Utah fallout, we thought about it as local. This very literally may be a mistake.

We mentioned Tibet in order to quiet excessive fears about mutations which may have been, I'm sure which in many people *have* been aroused – but I do not want to spend time to discuss these things in any detail. There are much more important things to say.

What I would like to say is this: that many of us have given careful thought, great worry, and as much work as we possibly could, to diminish any danger that we possibly can.

Foremost among leaders is Dr. Libby, who, years before he became Commissioner, studied the fallout problem and tried to reduce the hazards in every way possible. All of us have worked on it, and there is now a release from the Atomic Energy Commission. The results are in, and because the results are fortunately unclassified, as they should be, it is possible to discuss these things freely.

I talked to you about our recent experiment underground. A nuclear bomb was exploded underground, as probably many of you know, in Nevada. This nuclear bomb was rather small, 1.7 kilotons – not in the big class. This explosion was completely contained. No detectable radioactivity leaked out, and we have very good hope indeed that as time goes on we can make big bombs, too, and big tests, too, where no radioactivity *whatsoever* will leak out.

These tests are only a preparation toward the peaceful use of

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nuclear explosions. With these tests, it is possible to crush rock, to make it possible to mine massive iron deposits for instance. We don't know that; we are trying to find out whether it can be done, but our hopes are high. It is quite possible that such explosions can be used to increase oil production, it is quite possible that such explosions can dig canals. These are great possibilities in the future, and I do not want to see them cut short.

Linus Pauling: I agree thoroughly with Dr. Teller in the need to continue to learn more about the world; to learn more about nuclear reactions; to learn how to develop nuclear energy for peacetime purposes, and all of the things that he has said that we need to develop. I think they can be developed even though we have an international agreement to stop nuclear tests. For example, these developments might be carried out under an international agency. I'm sure that they would be done in a different way from the experiments that are involved in the nuclear tests, which are mainly tests to see whether a particular weapon will explode under certain conditions or not. It is not the peacetime development of nuclear energy, even nuclear energy applied in the forms of explosions, that we want to see stopped.

I believe that we can prevent the damage to the health of human beings, and to the children, the unborn children of future generations: that we can work in this way in the effort to produce a world of the future that will be a world in which morality is a factor of prime importance.

We believe as individuals that we should obey the commandment "Thou Shalt Not Kill." The time has come now for nations, too, to accept this commandment. This commandment must not be interpreted as meaning "Thou Shalt Not Kill Except When the Leaders of Nations Are Unable to Agree and Have Gone to War."

Edward Teller: I am no expert on the question of international agreements. To my mind, if peaceful uses of atomic energy could be safely pursued under joint international sponsorship – if it could be done – it would be wonderful. I wish it could be done; I don't know whether it's possible. I know that a ban on all other tests is dangerous, because a ban can be violated by Russia, and won't be violated by us.

But I would like to tell you now one thing that I think is

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important. I have to tell you that I am not talking about these things calmly. I have feelings, I have strong feelings. Many people were killed in Hungary, from where I came, and all people in Hungary lost their freedom.

This question of freedom is the most important question in my mind. I don't want to kill anybody. I am passionately opposed to killing, but I'm even more passionately fond of freedom. The freedom of Dr. Pauling and of myself expressing our opinions freely on any subject, however broad, however far removed from our proper competence, but particularly, to be able to express our opinions in the fields we really know; this would not be possible in Russia.

Dr. Pauling made a big discovery about resonance in chemical bonds. For this he received the Nobel Prize. For years this discovery was suppressed in Russia because it contradicted some kind of official philosophy in Russia.

I am talking for my freedom, for his freedom, and for the freedom for all of us.

Moderator: The agreed-upon limits of the debate have been reached. It is apparent that the issue has not been resolved. I'm sure both our guests would agree that its ultimate solution rests in our hands, that each of us bears the moral obligation to examine the evidence, draw conclusions from this evidence, and act upon our convictions.

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NOTES FROM THE ACADEMY

On Atoms and Human Knowledge*

NIELS BOHR

IN THE history of science, this century's exploration of the world of atoms has hardly any parallel in so far as the progress of knowledge and the mastery of that nature of which we ourselves are part are concerned. However, with every increase of knowledge and abilities is connected a greater responsibility; and the fulfilment of the rich promise and the elimination of the new dangers of the atomic age confront our whole civilization with a serious challenge which can be met only by cooperation of all peoples, resting on a mutual understanding of the human fellowship. In this situation, it is important to realize that science, which knows no national boundaries and whose achievements are the common possession of mankind, has through the ages united men in their efforts to elucidate the foundations of our knowledge. As I shall attempt to show, the study of atoms, which was to entail such far-reaching consequences and whose progress has been based on world-wide cooperation, not only has deepened our insight into a new domain of experience, but has thrown new light on general problems of knowledge.

At first, it might seem surprising that atomic science should contain a lesson of a general nature, but we must remember that it has in all stages of its development concerned profound problems of knowledge. Thus, thinkers of antiquity, by assuming a limit for the divisibility of substances, attempted to find a basis for understanding the features of permanency exhibited by natural phenomena, in spite of their multifariousness and variability. Although atomic ideas have contributed more and more fruitfully to the development of physics and chemistry since the Renaissance, they were regarded as a hy-

* The content of this article formed the basis of the author's introduction to the panel discussion at the 1401st meeting of the Academy, November 13, 1957. This article has appeared in Danish in the 1956 Yearbook of the Danish Academy of Science and Letters, and is included in a collection of articles by the author, to be published shortly by John Wiley and Sons, New York, under the title *Atomic Physics and Human Knowledge*.

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pothesis right up to the beginning of this century. Indeed, it was taken for granted that our sense organs, themselves composed of innumerable atoms, were too coarse to observe the smallest parts of matter. This situation was, however, to become essentially changed by the great discoveries at the turn of the century and, as is well known, progress in experimental technique made it possible to record the effects of single atoms and to obtain information on the more elementary particles of which the atoms themselves were found to be composed.

In spite of the deep influence exerted by ancient atomism on the development of the mechanical conception of nature, it was the study of immediately accessible astronomical and physical experience which made it possible to trace the regularities expressed in the so-called classical physics. Galileo's dictum, according to which the account of phenomena should be based on measurable quantities, made it possible to eliminate such animistic views which had so long hindered the rational formulation of mechanics. In Newton's principles, the foundation was laid of a deterministic description permitting, from the knowledge of the state of a physical system at a given moment, prediction of its state at any subsequent time. On the same lines, it was possible to account for electromagnetic phenomena. This required, however, that the description of the state of the system should include, besides the positions and velocities of the electrified and magnetized bodies, the strength and direction of the electrical and magnetic forces at every point of space, at the given moment.

The conceptual framework which is characteristic of classical physics was long thought to provide the correct tool for the description of all physical phenomena, and not least was it suited to the utilization and development of atomic ideas. Of course, for systems such as ordinary bodies which are composed of an enormous number of constituent parts, there could be no question of an exhaustive description of the state of the system. Without abandoning the deterministic ideal, it became possible, however, on the basis of the principles of classical mechanics, to deduce statistical regularities reflecting many of the properties of material bodies. Even though the mechanical laws of motion permit a complete reversal of the course of single processes, full explanation of the characteristic feature of irreversibility in heat phenomena was found in the statistical energy equilibrium resulting from the interaction of the molecules. This great extension of the application of mechanics emphasized

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further the indispensability of atomic ideas to the description of nature and opened the first possibilities of counting the atoms of the substances.

However, clarification of the foundation of the laws of thermodynamics was to open the way for recognition of a feature of wholeness in atomic processes far beyond the old doctrine of the limited divisibility of matter. As is well known, the closer analysis of heat radiation became the test of the scope of classical physical ideas. The discovery of electromagnetic waves had already provided a basis for understanding the propagation of light, explaining many of the optical properties of substances; but endeavours to account for radiation equilibrium confronted such ideas with insurmountable difficulties. The circumstance that here one had to do with arguments based on general principles and quite independent of special assumptions regarding the constituents of the substances led Planck, in the first year of this century, to the discovery of the universal quantum of action, which showed clearly that the classical physical description is an idealization of limited applicability. In phenomena on the ordinary scale, the actions involved are so large compared to the quantum that it can be left out of consideration. However, in proper quantum processes, we meet regularities which are completely foreign to the mechanical conception of nature and which defy pictorial deterministic description.

The task with which Planck's discovery confronted physicists was nothing less than, by means of a thorough analysis of the presuppositions on which the application of our most elementary concepts are based, to provide room for the quantum of action in a rational generalization of the classical physical description. During the development of quantum physics, entailing so many surprises, we have time and again been reminded of the difficulties of orienting ourselves in a domain of experience far from that to the description of which our means of expression are adapted. Rapid progress has been made possible by a wide and intensive collaboration among physicists from many countries, whose diverse approaches have helped in a most fruitful way to focus the problem ever more sharply. On this occasion, of course, it will not be possible to deal in detail with individual contributions, but as a background for the following considerations I shall remind you briefly of some of the main features of the development.

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While Planck cautiously limited himself to statistical arguments and emphasized the difficulties of abandoning the classical foundations in the detailed description of nature, Einstein daringly pointed to the necessity of taking the quantum of action into account in individual atomic phenomena. In the same year that he so harmoniously completed the framework of classical physics by establishing the theory of relativity, he showed that the description of observations on photoelectric effects requires that the transmission of energy to each of the electrons expelled from the substances corresponds to the absorption of a so-called quantum of radiation. Since the idea of waves is indispensable to the account of the propagation of light, there could be no question of simply replacing it with a corpuscular description, and one was therefore confronted with a peculiar dilemma whose solution was to require a thorough analysis of the scope of pictorial concepts.

As is well known, this question was further accentuated by Rutherford's discovery of the atomic nucleus which, despite its minuteness, contains almost the whole mass of the atom and whose electrical charge corresponds to the number of electrons in the neutral atom. This gave a simple picture of the atom which immediately suggested the application of mechanical and electromagnetic ideas. Yet, it was clear that, according to classical physical principles, no configuration of electrical particles could possess the stability necessary to the explanation of the physical and chemical properties of atoms. In particular, according to classical electromagnetic theory, every motion of the electrons around the atomic nucleus would produce a continual radiation of energy implying a rapid contraction of the system until the electrons became united with the nucleus into a neutral particle of dimensions vanishingly small relative to those which must be ascribed to atoms. However, in the hitherto entirely incomprehensible empirical laws for the line spectra of the elements was found a hint as to the decisive importance of the quantum of action for the stability and radiative reactions of the atom.

The point of departure became here the so-called quantum postulate, according to which every change in the energy of an atom is the result of a complete transition between two of its stationary states. By assuming further that all atomic radiative reactions involve the emission or absorption of a single light quantum, the energy values of the stationary states could be determined from the spectra. It was evident that no explanation of the indivisibility of the transi-

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tion processes, or their appearance under given conditions, could be given within the framework of deterministic description. However, it proved possible to obtain a survey of the electron bindings in the atom, which reflected many of the properties of substances, with the aid of the so-called correspondence principle. On the basis of a comparison with the classically expected course of the processes, directives were sought for a statistical generalization of the description compatible with the quantum postulate. Still, it became more and more clear that in order to obtain a consistent account of atomic phenomena it was necessary to renounce even more the use of pictures, and that a radical reformulation of the whole description was needed to provide room for all features implied by the quantum of action.

The solution which was reached as a result of the ingenious contributions of many of the most eminent theoretical physicists of our time was surprisingly simple. As in the formulation of relativity theory, adequate tools were found in highly developed mathematical abstractions. The quantities which in classical physics are used to describe the state of a system are replaced in quantum mechanical formalism by symbolic operators whose commutability is limited by rules containing the quantum. This implies that quantities such as positional coordinates and corresponding momentum components of particles cannot simultaneously be ascribed definite values. In this way, the statistical character of the formalism is displayed as a natural generalization of the description of classical physics. In addition, this generalization permitted a consequent formulation of the regularities which limit the individuality of identical particles and which, like the quantum itself, cannot be expressed in terms of usual physical pictures.

By means of the methods of quantum mechanics it was possible to account for a very large amount of the experimental evidence on the physical and chemical properties of substances. Not only was the binding of electrons in atoms and molecules clarified in detail, but a deep insight was also obtained into the constitution and reactions of atomic nuclei. In this connection, we may mention that the probability laws for spontaneous radioactive transmutations have been harmoniously incorporated into the statistical quantum mechanical description. Also, the understanding of the properties of the new elementary particles, which have been observed in recent years in the study of transmutations of atomic nuclei at high energies, has

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been subject to continual progress resulting from the adaption of the formalism to the invariance requirements of relativity theory. Still, we are confronted with new problems whose solution obviously demands further abstractions suited to combine the quantum of action with the elementary electric charge.

In spite of the fruitfulness of quantum mechanics within such a wide domain of experience, the renunciation of accustomed demands on physical explanation has caused many physicists and philosophers to doubt that we are dealing with an exhaustive description of atomic phenomena. In particular, the view has been expressed that the statistical mode of description must be regarded as a temporary expedient which, in principle, ought to be replaceable by a deterministic description. The thorough discussion of this question has, however, led to that clarification of our position as observers in atomic physics which has given us the epistemological lesson referred to in the beginning of this lecture.

As the goal of science is to augment and order our experience, every analysis of the conditions of human knowledge must rest on considerations of the character and scope of our means of communication. Our basis is, of course, the language developed for orientation in our surroundings and for the organization of human communities. However, the increase of experience has repeatedly raised questions as to the sufficiency of the concepts and ideas incorporated in daily language. Because of the relative simplicity of physical problems, they are especially suited to investigate the use of our means of communication. Indeed, the development of atomic physics has taught us how, without leaving common language, it is possible to create a framework sufficiently wide for an exhaustive description of new experience.

In this connection, it is imperative to realize that in every account of physical experience one must describe both experimental conditions and observations by the same means of communication as one used in classical physics. In the analysis of single atomic particles, this is made possible by irreversible amplification effects – such as a spot on a photographic plate left by the impact of an electron, or an electric discharge created in a counter device – and the observations concern only where and when the particle is registered on the plate or its energy on arrival at the counter. Of course, this information presupposes knowledge of the position of the photographic plate rel-

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ative to the other parts of the experimental arrangement, such as regulating diaphragms and shutters defining space-time coordination or electrified and magnetized bodies which determine the external force fields acting on the particle and permit energy measurements. The experimental conditions can be varied in many ways, but the point is that in each case we must be able to communicate to others what we have done and what we have learned, and that therefore the functioning of the measuring instruments must be described within the framework of classical physical ideas.

As all measurements thus concern bodies sufficiently heavy to permit the quantum to be neglected in their description, there is, strictly speaking, no new observational problem in atomic physics. The amplification of atomic effects, which makes it possible to base the account on measurable quantities and which gives the phenomena a peculiar closed character, only emphasizes the irreversibility characteristic of the very concept of observation. While, within the frame of classical physics, there is no difference in principle between the description of the measuring instruments and the objects under investigation, the situation is essentially different when we study quantum phenomena, since the quantum of action imposes restrictions on the description of the state of the systems by means of space-time coordinates and momentum-energy quantities. Since the deterministic description of classical physics rests on the assumption of an unrestricted compatability of space-time coordination and the dynamical conservation laws, we are obviously confronted here with the problem of whether, as regards atomic objects, such a description can be fully retained.

The role of the interaction between objects and measuring instruments in the description of quantum phenomena was found to be especially important for the clarification of this main point. Thus, as stressed by Heisenberg, the locating of an object in a limited space-time domain involves, according to quantum mechanics, an exchange of momentum and energy between instrument and object which is the greater the smaller the domain chosen. It was therefore of the utmost importance to investigate the extent to which the interaction entailed in observation can be taken into account separately in the description of phenomena. This question has been the focus of much discussion, and there have appeared many proposals which aim at the complete control of all interactions. In such considerations however, due regard is not taken to the fact that the very account

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of the functioning of measuring instruments involves that any interaction implied by the quantum, between these and the atomic objects, be inseparably entailed in the phenomena.

Indeed, every experimental arrangement permitting the registration of an atomic particle in a limited space-time domain demands fixed measuring rods and synchronized clocks which, from their very definition, exclude the control of momentum and energy transmitted to them. Conversely, any unambiguous application of the dynamical conservation laws in quantum physics requires that the description of the phenomena involve a renunciation in principle of detailed space-time coordination. This mutual exclusiveness of the experimental conditions implies that the whole experimental arrangement must be taken into account in a well-defined description of the phenomena. The indivisibility of quantum phenomena finds its consequent expression in the circumstance that every definable subdivision would require a change of the experimental arrangement with the appearance of new individual phenomena. Thus, the very foundation of a deterministic description has disappeared and the statistical character of the predictions is evidenced by the fact that in one and the same experimental arrangement there will in general appear observations corresponding to different individual processes.

Such considerations not only have clarified the above-mentioned dilemma with respect to the propagation of light, but have also completely solved the corresponding paradoxes confronting pictorial representation of the behavior of material particles. Here, of course, we cannot seek a physical explanation in the customary sense; all we can demand in a new field of experience is the removal of any apparent contradiction. However great the contrasts exhibited by atomic phenomena under different experimental conditions, such phenomena must be termed complementary in the sense that each is well defined and that together they exhaust all definable knowledge about the objects concerned. The quantum-mechanical formalism, the sole aim of which is the comprehension of observations obtained under experimental conditions described by simple physical concepts, gives just such an exhaustive complementary account of a very large domain of experience. The renunciation of pictorial representation involves only the state of atomic objects, while the foundation of the description of the experimental condition, as well as our freedom to choose them, is fully retained. The whole formalism which can be applied only to closed phenomena must in all such respects be considered a rational generalization of classical physics.

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In view of the influence of the mechanical conception of nature on philosophical thinking, it is understandable that one has sometimes seen in the notion of complementarity a reference to the subjective observer, incompatible with the objectivity of scientific description. Of course, in every field of experience we must retain a sharp distinction between the observer and the content of the observations, but we must realize that the discovery of the quantum of action has thrown new light on the very foundation of the description of nature, and revealed hitherto unnoticed presuppositions to the rational use of the concepts on which the communication of experience rests. In quantum physics, as we have seen, an account of the functioning of the measuring instruments is indispensable to the definition of phenomena and we must, so-to-say, distinguish between subject and object in such a way that each single case secures the unambiguous application of the elementary physical concepts used in the description. Far from containing any mysticism foreign to the spirit of science, the notion of complementarity points to the logical conditions for description and comprehension of experience in atomic physics.

The epistemological lesson of atomic physics has naturally, just as have earlier advances in physical science, given rise to renewed consideration of the use of our means of communication for objective description in other fields of knowledge. Not least the emphasis placed on the observational problem raises the questions of the position of living organisms in the description of nature and of our own situation as thinking and acting beings. Even though it was, to some extent, possible within the frame of classical physics to compare organisms with machines, it was clear that such comparisons did not take sufficient account of many of the characteristics of life. The inadequacy of the mechanical concept of nature for the description of man's situation is particularly evident in the difficulties entailed in the primitive distinction between soul and body.

The problems with which we are confronted here are obviously connected with the fact that the description of many aspects of human existence demands a terminology which is not immediately founded on simple physical pictures. However, recognition of the limited applicability of such pictures in the account of atomic phenomena gives a hint as to how biological and psychological phenomena may be comprehended within the frame of objective description. As before, it is here important to be aware of the separation be-

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tween the observer and the content of the communications. While in the mechanical conception of nature the subject-object distinction was fixed, room is provided for a wider description through the recognition that the consequent use of our concepts requires different placings of such a separation.

Without attempting any exhaustive definition of organic life, we may say that a living organism is characterized by its integrity and adaptability, which implies that a description of the internal functions of an organism and its reaction to external stimuli often requires the word *purposeful*, which is foreign to physics and chemistry. Although the results of atomic physics have found a multitude of applications in biophysics and biochemistry, the closed individual quantum phenomena exhibit, of course, no feature suggesting the notion of life. As we have seen, the description of atomic phenomena, exhaustive within a wide domain of experience, is based on the free use of such measuring instruments as are necessary to the proper application of the elementary concepts. In a living organism, however, such a distinction between the measuring instruments and the objects under investigation can hardly be fully carried through, and we must be prepared that every experimental arrangement whose aim is a description of the functioning of the organism, which is well defined in the sense of atomic physics, will be incompatible with the display of life.

In biological research, references to features of wholeness and purposeful reactions of organisms are used together with the increasingly detailed information on structure and regulatory processes that has resulted in such great progress, not least in medicine. Here, we have to do with a practical approach to a field where the means of expression used for the description of its various aspects refer to mutually exclusive conditions of observation. In this connection, it must be realized that the attitudes termed mechanistic and finalistic are not contradictory points of view, but rather exhibit a complementary relationship which is connected with our position as observers of nature. To avoid misunderstanding, however, it is essential to note that – in contrast to the account of atomic regularities – a description of organic life and an evaluation of its possibilities of development cannot aim at completeness, but only at sufficient width of the conceptual framework.

In the account of psychical experiences, we meet conditions of

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observation and corresponding means of expression still further removed from the terminology of physics. Quite apart from the extent to which the use of words like "instinct" and "reason" in the description of animal behavior is necessary and justifiable, the word " consciousness," applied to oneself as well as to others, is indispensable when describing the human situation. While the terminology adapted to orientation in the environment could take as its starting point simple physical pictures and ideas of causality, the account of our states of mind required a typical complementary mode of description. Indeed, the use of words like "thought" and "feeling" does not refer to a firmly connected causal chain, but to experiences which exclude each other because of different distinctions between the conscious content and the background which we loosely term ourselves.

The relation between the experience of a feeling of volition and conscious pondering on motives for action is especially instructive. The indispensability of such apparently contrasting means of expression to the description of the richness of conscious life strikingly reminds us of the way in which elementary physical concepts are used in atomic physics. In such a comparison, however, we must recognize that psychical experience cannot be subjected to physical measurements and that the very concept of volition does not refer to a generalization of a deterministic description, but from the outset points to characteristics of human life. Without entering into the old philosophical discussion of freedom of the will, I shall only mention that in an objective description of our situation the use of the word "volition" corresponds closely to that of words like "hope" and " responsibility," which are equally indispensable to human communication.

We have here reached problems which touch human fellowship and where the variety of means of expression originates from the impossibility of characterizing by any fixed distinction the role of the individual in the society. The fact that human cultures, developed under different conditions of living, exhibit such contrasts with respect to established traditions and social patterns allows one, in a certain sense, to call such cultures complementary. However, we are here in no way dealing with definite mutually exclusive features, such as those we meet in the objective description of general problems of physics and psychology, but with differences in attitude which can be appreciated or ameliorated by extended inter-

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course between peoples. In our time, when increasing knowledge and ability more than ever link the fate of all peoples, international collaboration in science has far-reaching tasks which may be furthered not least by an awareness of the general conditions for human knowledge.

Remarks on Niels Bohr's Talk

P. W. Bridgman

In the short time available, it will be possible to select only two of the many stimulating vistas opened by Professor Bohr for further comment. The first is the realization that all the new experimental facts which are responsible for the development of quantum theory, and all the new concepts which are embodied in that theory, have to find their expression and their meaning on the level and in the language of everyday life. For it is we who are having the experience, and we who are talking about it to each other. The fact that we have achieved a degree of success in incorporating into our language the new outlooks – some of which, at first glance, seemed even inconsistent logically with our preconceptions of what was possible – suggests that the language and the way of thinking of everyday life conceal features of which we are ordinarily not aware. The second point is that the object of knowledge and the instrument of knowledge cannot legitimately be separated, but must be taken together as one whole. When this is taken into account, the paradox disappears from such often discussed situations as that of the photon which apparently "knows" of the existence of a slit in the interference apparatus through which it does not pass. From this point of view the electron is not to be dissociated from the apparatus which conjures it into existence. We should properly say, "the apparatus electrons," rather than saying that there is an electron in the apparatus. When it is considered that it may be either a position apparatus which electrons or a momentum apparatus which electrons, the paradox disappears from the Heisenberg principle.

This means that, properly, there is no such thing as a microscopic domain which is "revealed" to us by the microscope, but that there is rather an altered macroscopic domain, which we have found how to alter by the invention of the microscope – an

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obviously macroscopic instrument. This means that if we want to hold ourselves to an awareness of the total situation, we should never think of bacteria or other microscopic objects without thinking of microscopes; and at the other end of the scale, we should never think of nebulae without thinking of telescopes. Nor should the physicist think of protons and neutrons without thinking of cyclotrons (or a million dollars). Now it is admittedly a difficult thing for us to hold ourselves to an awareness of microscopes when thinking of bacteria, and if we always had to do this we would not get very far in our thinking. It must have been a very early invention or discovery, perhaps the very first intellectual invention, to find that for most purposes we do not need to keep the whole situation in mind, but can fasten our attention on only parts of it. This means, in particular, that for most purposes it is all right to think of the bacterium without the microscope. The operation by which we fasten attention on an aspect of a whole we may call the operation of "isolation." It is perhaps the most important operation we perform, and without it rational thought would hardly be possible. Nevertheless, it is possible to push the operation of isolation too far, and quantum theory has uncovered situations in which we definitely get into trouble when we apply the operation of isolation uncritically.

Now it appears to me that quantum theory itself as practiced by the theoretical physicist does not completely divorce itself from the operation of isolation, nor does it consider all the aspects of the complex situation as we can see it in the context of daily life. Professor Bohr has this situation plainly in mind when he concerns himself with the general problems of knowledge which have been revealed by our experience with quantum theory. Conventional quantum theory distinguishes between object of knowledge and instrument of knowledge. But knowledge itself implies a knower, and for quantum theory the knower is not part of the picture, but he stands on the outside looking on. In one of Professor Bohr's writings I find this: "In every field of experience we must retain a sharp distinction between the observer and the contents of the observations." But if we do maintain this distinction, have we not thereby isolated the observer from his observation? To reproduce the whole situation, not only must we hold ourselves to an awareness of the microscope, but also to an awareness of ourselves using the microscope and giving its results significance. This latter is

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admittedly difficult – even more difficult than remembering the microscope – but I believe we have to find how to do it before we can be satisfied that we have achieved even an approach to intellectual mastery.

It is not apparent, at present, whether this problem has a solution or how far we can progress toward a solution. The problem is different in *kind* from the conventional problem of quantum theory, for now the knower has to know himself. This presents a self-reflexive situation which often leads to paradox and which is always full of difficulty. The goal that we would like to reach here is a special case of a general intellectual ideal, namely to get everything under a single, unitary point of view. This problem often presents itself and, I believe, has never been solved. I am not at all sure that it is capable of solution because of the nature of thought itself. We have learned how to deal with the problem after a fashion: we push one line of attack as far as we can, and when the difficulties become too great, we shift to another line of attack. Otherwise expressed, we attack our problem by the method of spiraling approximation, or by operating on different levels. There are almost innumerable examples where we encounter logical incompatibles when we push our analysis to the limit. We cannot think of a continuous fluid without at the same time thinking of particles in it to which we tie our thought; we cannot give meaning to the concepts and operations of probability except in a deterministic environment; we cannot specify what we mean by motion without invoking fixed points of space and instants of time; and we cannot even talk about our fundamental problem of getting everything under a single point of view without isolating the pieces that we are trying to bring together. Always we run into this sort of thing, and always we meet the situation by switching to another point of view. Now this is obviously very much like the situations presented in the first instance by quantum theory, and which Professor Bohr has gathered into a broader principle under the name of "the principle of complementarity." I do not know whether Professor Bohr would call all of the examples above examples of complementarity, or whether he would regard the opposition of incompatibles as too vague and difficult to formulate to warrant calling them examples of a "principle." Whatever the name we apply, it seems to me that situations of this general nature present us with our most important and most baffling intellectual problem.

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P. W. BRIDGMAN, born in 1882 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, has been continually at Harvard University since 1900. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1946 for his work in high pressure physics. Now Higgins University Professor, Emeritus, he has published numerous books and articles for technical journals, including *Physics of High Pressure, Dimensional Analysis, Logic of Modern Physics,* and *The Intelligent Individual and Society.*

ABRAHAM KAPLAN was born in 1918 in Odessa, Russia. He has been Professor of Philosophy at the University of California at Los Angeles since 1946. Presently on leave in the Orient, he has also served as visiting professor at the University of Michigan, Harvard University, and Columbia University. His work lies in aesthetics, social philosophy, and methodology of the behavioral sciences; his writings include *Society Learns the Language of Mathematics, Obscenity as an Esthetic Category,* and *Power and Society; a Framework for Political Inquiry.*

GEORGE F. KENNAN was born in 1904 in Wisconsin. He served in the Foreign Service of the U.S.A. from 1926 to 1950, and in 1952 was appointed Ambassador to the U.S.S.R. Upon his retirement from the Service in 1953, he returned to his post, held from 1950 to 1952, at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, N. J. During the current academic year, he is visiting lecturer at Oxford University, England. He has written on American diplomacy and foreign policy. *Russia Leaves the War,* the first volume of a series on Soviet-American relations, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1957; his latest books are *The Decision to Intervene,* the second volume of the same series, and *Russia, the Atom, and the West.*

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